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If the state
cannot govern,
violence will

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An icon that
transcends
music

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Two forgotten
kingdom of
Bengal

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Women's
Kabaddi World
Cup begins in
Dhaka today

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ICT to deliver judgment on Hasina today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The International Crimes Tribunal 1 is set to deliver its verdict today in a case against deposed prime minister Sheikh Hasina and two of her aides over alleged crimes against humanity during last year's July uprising.

Hasina, 78, has defied the tribunal's orders to return from India to face trial on charges of ordering a deadly crackdown that led to the student-led uprising that led to her ouster on August 5 last year.

Her co-accused are former home minister Asaduzzaman Khan Kamal, also a fugitive, and former police chief Chowdhury Abdullah Al-Mamun, who is in custody and has pleaded guilty. Mamun has also become a state witness, the first accused to do so since the tribunal was set up in 2010.

The court is expected to sit at 11:00am, said Prosecutor Gazi Monawar Hossain Tamim.

Prosecutors have filed five counts against the accused, including failure to prevent murder, amounting to crimes against humanity under Bangladeshi law. They have sought the death penalty if the accused are found guilty.

Prosecutors also asked the tribunal to confiscate the three



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All major parties bound for polls

MOHUDDIN ALAMGIR and MAMUNUR RASHID

Once seemed like an endless deadlock, the long political storm surrounding the July charter's implementation is finally subsiding as Bangladesh's major parties retreat from their hard-line stances.

The Jamaat-e-Islami and its allies are the latest to soften their tone. Yesterday, they chose to refrain from announcing a pre-scheduled indefinite sit-in to press their five-point demand, which included a referendum before the national polls.

Earlier, the BNP and the National Citizen Party have also changed their tune.

For ordinary citizens, this change in the mood offers a sense of relief.

The speeches, the press briefings continue, but behind the scenes, parties are turning their attention to the ballot box. From strategy sessions to mobilising supporters to finalising candidates, preparations for the next election are in full swing.

Despite much confusion, frustration, and uncertainty, a possibility has now emerged that the election will take place in February 2026, BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir said yesterday.

He urged political parties to support the election process, warning that certain quarters were deliberately trying to create uncertainty. "By raising various demands, they seek to disrupt, halt, or delay the election," he said at a programme marking the 49th death anniversary of Maulana Abdul Hamid Khan Bhashani at the Jatiya Press Club.

Fakhrul said a certain quarter is plotting to create chaos on Monday, centring the verdict on what he termed the "fascist Hasina's massacre".

He cautioned that some groups may exploit political divisions and instability to create disorder. Therefore, he stressed, all political parties must act responsibly regarding the election.

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"Additional personnel have been assigned to strategic locations, including Dhaka, while special teams are on standby."

Police spokesperson
AHM SAHADAT HOSSAIN

programmes centring around the ICT verdict due today.

Also yesterday, the Supreme Court sent a letter to the Army Headquarters, requesting troops to be positioned around the tribunal complex ahead of the verdict, SC spokesperson Moajjem Hussain told this newspaper.

The Awami League, whose political activities remain suspended, had earlier announced a "Dhaka lockdown" for last Thursday. It later unveiled a four-day programme, including a two-day "complete shutdown" from yesterday.

Meanwhile, the eight-party alliance, including Jamaat-e-Islami, plans to take to the streets today.

At a press conference yesterday, Jamaat Secretary General Mia Golam Porwar said they had participated in earlier programmes and would do so again, adding that "the nation will not allow any scope for sabotage in favour of fascism".

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MULTIPLE INDICATOR CLUSTER SURVEY (MICS) 2025

Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS), Unicef

Sample size: Nearly 63,000 households

Primary school enrollment 80% but attendance drops sharply at higher levels

About 6-7% of primary age children remain out of school

Neonatal mortality remains high at 22 per 1,000 live births

C-section rate rises to as high as 75%

More than 80% household samples of water found contaminated with E. coli

Child labour involves 9.2% of children aged 5-17, up from 6.8% in 2019, placing 12 lakh more children at risk

Violence widespread, with 86% subjected to violent discipline

Child marriage declined to 47% from 51.4% in 2019, still nearly half of girls marry before 18

Sanitation access improved to 73% but still 10.6 crore people do not have access to safely managed drinking water

Only 59% under-5 children are registered, and 47% hold birth certificates

Unsafe levels of lead found in 38% kids aged 1 to 5

Finds MICS survey

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A new study has revealed that 38 percent of the surveyed children aged 12-59 months have blood lead levels above the safe threshold -- a finding that indicates serious health risk among children.

Nearly 8 percent of the surveyed pregnant women also had blood lead levels above the threshold.

The study showed that three divisions -- Dhaka (65.2 percent), Sylhet (46.7 percent), and Chattogram (42.1 percent) -- recorded the highest proportions of children with high blood lead levels, exceeding the national average of 38.3 percent.

Among children with high blood lead levels, the majority (52 percent) were in the richest quintile, compared to the poorest quintile (30 percent).

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Population control in reverse gear after decades

Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey 2025 finds sudden rise in fertility rate

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The country's fertility rate rose to 2.4 percent in 2019 to 47 percent, yet nearly half the girls marry before 18.

From 6.3 in 1975, the fertility rate steadily fell, largely due to government policies and programmes, and stagnated at 2.3 in 2012. This recent rise could have far-reaching implications.

The Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey 2025, the most comprehensive survey on women and children, highlighted progress and challenges in health, nutrition, protection, and development.

Conducted in nearly 63,000 households over one year, the survey report released yesterday showed progress made in reducing mortality of children under five years old, significant gains in births at institutions, births attended by skilled professionals, and improvements in sanitation.

It underscored the rate of child marriage, severe short-term undernutrition, high child marriage

rate, and maternal anaemia as areas of concern.

Child marriage declined from 51.4 percent in 2019 to 47 percent, yet nearly half the girls marry before 18.

Child labour now affects 9.2 percent of children aged 5 to 17, up from 6.8 percent in 2019, the year of the previous survey. This translates to 12 lakh more children at risk. At least 86 percent children were subjected to violent discipline.

The survey, while concluding, said the country is moving forward, but to accelerate the progress and to ensure no child is left behind, it must focus more on quality, safety, inclusion, and protection.

Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics, with technical and financial support from UNICEF, conducted the seventh round of the survey.

BIRTH RATE RISE

The fertility rate for women aged 15 to 49, in the three years preceding the

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SEE PAGE 2 COL 4

GAP ROLLOUT New promises for safe food production

Experts stress the need for sustainability

MOSTAFA SHABUJ, Bogura

Sohel Rana had been growing mangoes since 2013 in traditional methods, often applying excessive chemical fertilisers and pesticides. He was aware of the health risks and the adverse effects on the soil, but he did what he needed to do for a greater yield. And until last year, the farmer from Naogaon sold his produce in the local market for a marginal profit.

All that has now changed. This summer, he took part in a mango exhibition in Qatar with 4.5 tonnes of Amrapali, Banana Mango, and Bari-4 mangoes, making a profit of Tk 16 lakh, thanks to the high quality and global demand for farm products grown under Good Agricultural Practices (GAP).

"We have been hearing about GAP in various agriculture-related meetings and seminars for a long time, but there was no such

traceability of the product, regulation, and sustainability through detailed record-keeping. Traditional farming on the other hand is often less formal and adaptable to local conditions without standardised oversight.

The Bangladesh GAP initiative is a five-year programme being implemented by the government, the World Bank and the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD).

Sohel Rana, however, is not the only farmer expecting high profits from local and global markets from safer farm products.

Since the launch of the project just two years ago, about 200,000 farmers have received training on GAP farming, which promotes ethical practices in agriculture, covering aspects from land preparation to post-harvest handling.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 4



GAP farming follows a structured, documented system

Fertilisers, pesticides are applied under expert supervision

2 lakh farmers and 1,400 agriculture officers trained so far

Govt to bring 3 lakh hectares under GAP farming, train 10 lakh farmers by 2028



Bhashani a lasting inspiration for democracy
Says Tarique

UNB, Dhaka

BNP acting chairman Tarique Rahman yesterday said Maulana Abdul Hamid Khan Bhashani will always remain a source of inspiration for the nation in securing the rights of the helpless and in protecting democracy, human rights, freedom and sovereignty.

"His immense patriotism, unwavering commitment to national interest, and courage to stand against enemies of democracy and humanity will inspire us for generations to come," he said in a message issued ahead of Bhashani's 49th death anniversary today.

"On the occasion of the death anniversary of Maulana Abdul Hamid Khan Bhashani, the leader of the downtrodden, I pay my deep respects to his memory and pray for the salvation of his departed soul," the BNP leader said.

Calling Bhashani an unforgettable

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BGB members stand guard outside the International Crimes Tribunal yesterday, as the tribunal is set to deliver its judgment today in a case against deposed prime minister Sheikh Hasina and two of her aides.

PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

ICT to deliver judgment on Hasina today

FROM PAGE 1
defendants' assets if convicted and distribute them among the victims' families.

The defence, however, expressed hope for their acquittal. Hasina has denied all charges.

This will be the tribunal's first verdict on the atrocities committed during the uprising.

Prosecutors said the court's delivery of the verdict is expected to be broadcast live on Bangladesh Television and private channels, subject to final approval by the tribunal.

Meanwhile, Home Adviser Jahangir Alam Chowdhury told reporters in Barishal yesterday that the government will execute the tribunal's verdict without delay.

Asked if the accused can file an appeal if found guilty, Prosecutor Tamim said a fugitive cannot avail the right to appeal while on the run.

According to the law, a convict must either be arrested or surrender to qualify for filing an appeal to the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court, he added.

"The appeal must be lodged within 30 days of the verdict, and the law mandates that the Appellate Division dispose of the appeal within 60 days of its filing," he told The Daily Star.

Hasina is also facing three more cases at the ICT, two over enforced disappearances and one concerning the alleged mass killings at Motijheel's Shapla Chattar in 2013.

Kamal faces two enforced disappearance cases.

New promises for safe food production

FROM PAGE 1
More than 1,400 sub assistant agriculture officers from Department of Agriculture Extension (DAE) also received training so they can assist the farmers and supervise their farming practices.

"After I obtained the GAP certificate, several Dhaka super shops contacted me and sought to buy my toxin-free vegetables. Some shops wanted to purchase my crops at prices higher than the market rate," said Ilias Sheikh, a vegetable farmer from Natore's Nadalanga upazila.

He has been farming vegetables on two acres of land for 25 years, earning little profits in some seasons, and barely recouping the production cost in other seasons. This year, he grew vegetables in compliance with GAP for the first time, and made more money.

Due to their high quality and supervised production, GAP crops, vegetables and fruits are in high demand in super shops in upscale areas, said Rofiqul Islam, a supply chain manager at Meena Bazar.

"Customers buy GAP-certified products with great enthusiasm. We could have sold more of these items, but farmers are yet to be able to meet the demand," he said.

OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

The European countries first started GAP in 1997, and the ASEAN countries in 2006, long before Bangladesh adopted the practices.

Bangladesh Agricultural Research Council (BARC) is leading the GAP initiative in Bangladesh while the DAE issues the certificate under the agriculture ministry's "Program on Agricultural and Rural Transformation for Nutrition, Entrepreneurship and Resilience in Bangladesh (PARTNER)."

The scheme is being financed through phased loans by two development partners - \$500 million from the WB and \$43 million from IFAD. The Bangladesh government is providing \$108 million, said Mahbuba Moonnoon, deputy programme director of PARTNER.

The Bangladesh GAP standard includes 246 control points under five modules, namely safe food, environmental management, worker

bench, chaired by Justice Md Golam Mortuza Mozumder, set November 17 for the verdict.

THE CHARGES

Count 1 charged the defendants with murder, attempted murder, torture, and other inhumane acts. They were accused of abetting, inciting, facilitating, being complicit in, and failing to prevent crimes committed against civilians by law enforcement and armed cadres of the Awami League and its affiliates.

Count 2 charges include ordering the use of lethal weapons, helicopters, and drones to subdue student protesters, with the accused allegedly guilty of superior command responsibility, complicity, facilitation, and conspiracy.

Count 3 relates to the murder of Begum Rokeya University student Abu Sayed on July 16, where they issued orders, incited, abetted, facilitated, conspired and were complicit in the crime.

Count 4 accuses the defendants of orchestrating the murder of six unarmed protesters in the capital's Chankharpul on August 5 by direct order, incitement, abetment, facilitation, complicity, and conspiracy.

Count 5 concerns the shooting dead of five protesters and the injury of another. It also accuses the three of burning the five dead bodies and another protester alive, with the defendants allegedly involved through complicity, facilitation, and instigation.

Proceedings began on August 4 with the testimony from the first prosecution witness. Of the 81 witnesses listed, 54, including former IGP Mamun and the investigation officer, testified.

After the arguments closed on October 23, the tribunal fixed November 13 for setting the judgment date. On that day, the three-member

Sher-e-Bangla Agricultural University.

He also said that the certification in Bangladesh is currently handled by a unit under the DAE, unlike Global GAP, which uses a private, independent body.

This could potentially reduce the international market acceptability of Bangladesh GAP-certified products.

Abdus Salam, executive chairman of BARC, said they will revise GAP standards to address overlapping compliances. He also admitted that a private body would be better for certification, but they are yet to find one capable of doing the job.

"We are looking for qualified private organisations or universities that will be included as certification bodies in the future," said Salam.

On sustainability, he said they plan to continue the monitoring and certification programmes since they have already trained 1,400 agriculture officers nationwide.

According to the Bangladesh GAP policy 2020, GAP products should be marketed with their logo and detailed information at a government-fixed price.

But branding and popularising the GAP products will require raising awareness of consumers, packaging and marketing across the country.

She warned that consuming food that contain chemicals and heavy metals can lead to long term health problems, including kidney disease, neurological disorders, and even cancer.

Asked how GAP will make a difference, she said that proper adherence to GAP ensures that the produce has no harmful chemical residues. It also retains the nutritional value of the food and the soil quality.

While experts hail GAP certification as the start of a new era for safe food production and commercial farming, they are concerned about the project's sustainability.

"The 246 control points in the Bangladesh GAP are overly complicated for farmers compared to the 190 conditions in the Global GAP standard. We suggest revising it down to the Global GAP benchmark," said Professor Abu Norman Faruq Ahmed, a GAP expert from the faculty of Plant Pathology.

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The Bangladesh GAP standard includes 246 control points under five modules, namely safe food, environmental management, worker

prevention (CDC) consider BLLs above 35 micrograms per litre to be concerning, especially for young children.

Lead exposure can seriously harm a child's health, causing damage to the brain and nervous system, slowed growth and development, learning and behavioural issues, hearing and speech problems, lower IQ, decreased attention levels, and poor academic performance, according to the CDC.

Earlier, several organisations, including icddr,b, and Environment and Social Development Organisation (ESDO), carried out relatively small size surveys on lead poisoning, exposing its adverse health impacts on people of different age groups, including children.

Experts say that the presence of any level of lead in blood is not safe. However, the US Centres for Disease Control and

All major parties bound for polls

FROM PAGE 1
He also said the country's economic and law and order situation is worsening day by day. Without an elected government, the situation will deteriorate further, he added.

Divisions among political parties deepened over several issues after the National Consensus Commission submitted its recommendations for implementing the constitutional reforms of the July charter on October 28.

The issues included the timing of the referendum on the charter, the implementation order, using a proportional representation system to form an upper house, and the notes of dissent.

On November 3, the government gave the parties seven days to reach a consensus. After the deadline expired, Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus announced a set of key decisions.

He said the national election and the referendum would be held on the same day, and an upper house would be introduced, formed through proportional representation.

Soon after the chief adviser's address, President Mohammed Shahabuddin issued the July National Charter (Constitution Reform) Implementation Order, 2025.

That night, the BNP welcomed the chief adviser's confirmation of the February 2026 election plan and the announcement that the referendum would be held on the same day.

BNP leaders said it was not fully satisfied with the government's decisions, such as the PR system for forming the upper house.

The party, told The Daily Star, "We reviewed the chief adviser's address at the meeting and found that several of our demands, including the order to implement the July National Charter and the introduction of the PR system for forming the upper house of parliament, have been met. That is why we did not move to announce our programme."

Maulana Yunus Ahmad, secretary general of Islami Andolan Bangladesh, told The Daily Star, "The meeting reviewed what we gained and what we did not gain from the chief adviser's speech. We saw that our gains are not insignificant."

He added that instead of making a hasty decision yesterday, the liaison committee will sit later and decide what the next course of action should be.

Besides the legal basis of the charter and PR system, they also demanded level playing field during electioneering, making visible progress in ensuring justice for all oppression, persecution, massacres, and corruption committed by the Awami League regime, and to ban the activities of the Jatiya Party.

At a press conference after the meeting, Jamaat Secretary General Mia Golam Porwar alleged that due to the "misguiding role" of three government advisers, a level playing field was still not being ensured.

He said the alliance's three demands had yet to be met, and for that reason they would continue their protests.

The alliance, however, would vote "yes" in the upcoming referendum to give a legal basis to the July charter, he added. They would also work to persuade the public to vote "yes".

Porwar said the eight parties had supported reforms from the very beginning. "But one particular party has opposed many of the key and fundamental reforms," he said. "That is why we are urging the nation to vote 'yes' in support of reform."

He also called on the government to inform the public about the referendum process.

A "force" belonging to one party had already begun campaigning for a "no" vote on digital platforms, Porwar said. "The whole nation supports reform. Those who oppose it will be rejected by the people."

Attending the programme, Rana Flowers, UNICEF representative to Bangladesh, said the survey comes at a critical time for Bangladesh and is a reflection of progress and challenges.

"While declines in child marriage and child mortality show what's possible, crises like lead poisoning and child labour are depriving millions of children of potential, and rising cesarean rates threaten women's health," she added.

UNICEF commits to supporting the government to turn this data into targeted action and change that leaves no child behind, she added.

Aleya Akter, secretary of Statistics and Informatics Division, said based on the data, they would work with ministries and divisions concerned.

Hossain Zillur Rahman, former adviser to a caretaker government, said the data has been provided and now the story has to be told for the betterment of children and women.

ESDO Director General Mohammed Mizanur Rahman chaired the report unveiling programme held at the Bangladesh-China Friendship Conference Centre.

Prevention (CDC) consider BLLs above 35 micrograms per litre to be concerning, especially for young children.

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For the first time in Bangladesh, the MICS included the new Blood Lead Level (BLL) Plus module. Apart from lead, the survey also analysed the presence of three other heavy metals - cadmium, arsenic, and mercury - in blood among 13,707 children (12-59 months) and pregnant women (15-49 years).

ESDO last month unveiled a study report saying that many local and unregistered manufacturers produce paints containing dangerously high levels of lead.

At the event, speakers said the findings underscore the urgency of identifying sources of contamination - such as industrial emissions, informal recycling process, and unsafe consumer products.

Marjorie Taylor blames Trump for threats against her

REUTERS, Washington

Republican lawmaker Marjorie Taylor Greene accused US President Donald Trump on Saturday of putting her life in danger, saying his online criticism has triggered a wave of threats against her.

Greene, once a longtime Trump loyalist who has more recently taken positions at odds with the president, said she has been contacted by private security firms warning about her safety.

"Aggressive rhetoric attacking me has historically led to death threats and multiple convictions of men who were radicalized by the same type (of) rhetoric being directed at me right now," Greene, a US House of Representatives member from Georgia, wrote in a post on X. "This time by the President of the United States."

Trump broke with Greene on Friday night in a withering social media post in which he referred to Greene as "Wacky" and a "ranting lunatic" who complained he would not take her calls. He continued his criticism on Saturday with two more social media posts, calling her a "Lightweight Congresswoman," "Traitor" and a "disgrace" to the Republican Party.

In her first response posted on Friday, Greene accused Trump of lying about her and trying to intimidate other Republicans before a House of Representatives vote next week on releasing files related to the late financier Jeffrey Epstein, a convicted sex offender who was friendly with Trump in the 1990s and 2000s before they had a falling out.

Unsafe levels of lead found in 38%

FROM PAGE 1

The survey said birthweights at healthcare facilities rose to 71 percent from 53.4 percent in 2019. Rate of deliveries made by skilled healthcare personnel rose to 77 percent from 59 percent in 2019. It said antenatal care coverage improved as well.

However, deliveries via C section rose to 51.8 percent from 36 percent in 2019.

Children, from 15 to 19 years of age, bearing children rose to 92 percent from 83 percent in 2019.

The survey shows child stunting dropped to 24 percent from 28 percent in 2019, but severe short-term undernutrition (wasting) increased from 9.8 percent in 2019 to 12.9 percent.

The mortality rate of children under 5 dropped to 33 per 1,000 live births from 40 in 2019, marking a steady but slower decline than seen in previous surveys.

Infant, one year-olds, mortality rate improved to 29 per 1,000 live births in 2019.

At least 73 percent of the households have access to basic sanitation, up from 64.4 percent in 2019.

However, access to safe drinking water dropped to 39.3 percent from 42.6 percent in 2019. This leaves over 10.6 crore people without access to safe drinking water.

E. coli bacteria was found in nearly half of water sources surveyed and over 80 percent of samples collected from households.

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Transfers in 38 key police posts, including new GMP chief

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government has appointed Israil Hawlader, DIG of Industrial Police, as the commissioner of Gazipur Metropolitan Police, and assigned new superintendents of police to six districts.

In addition, 31 other police officers have been transferred, according to home ministry gazettes yesterday.

PBI Superintendent of Police Mohammad Sarwar Alam has been posted as the SP of Gaibandha; Dinajpur SP Marufat Hussain to Faridpur; DMP Deputy Commissioner Mizanur Rahman to Dinajpur; Habiganj SP Sajedur Rahman to Pabna; DMP Deputy Commissioner Goutam Kumar Biswas to Habiganj; and Mohammad Billal Hossain has been transferred as the SP of Nilphamari.

Besides these postings, the current SPs of the respective districts have been reassigned to equivalent positions, while four DIG-rank and twelve additional DIG-rank officers have also been transferred to various posts.

The transfers were part of the police reshuffle ahead of the next national polls.



Police stop and seize battery-run rickshaws in front of Science Lab intersection, as many such vehicles continue to ply the main roads despite the ban. Drivers said they had to pay fines starting from Tk 600 to free their vehicles, putting financial strain on them. The photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

2ND DAY OF EC DIALOGUE

Parties flag concerns over referendum, 'invisible forces'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Election Commission yesterday resumed its electoral dialogue, meeting 12 more registered political parties at its headquarters in Dhaka's Agargaon as part of consultations ahead of the 13th national election scheduled for February next year.

Political leaders at the discussion urged the EC to demonstrate neutrality and ensure a fair and credible election through strict enforcement of laws and rules, without yielding to irregularities or "invisible forces".

Terming the commission a "referee" in conducting a free and impartial election, Chief Election



Commissioner AMM Nasir Uddin called on parties to adhere to the code of conduct.

On November 13, the EC began its electoral dialogue, meeting 12 parties on the opening day.

The first session yesterday ran from 10:30am to 12:30pm and was joined by representatives of Gonoforum, Gonofront, Islamic Front, Bangladesh, Islami Oikya Jote, Bangladesh Supreme

Party (BSP), and Bangladesh Jatiya Party.

Two factions of Islami Oikya Jote – one led by Mufti Sakhawat Hossain Razi and the other by Mufti Abul Hasanat Amini –

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Political parties still failing women

Say rights groups

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Women's rights organisations yesterday said political parties are still failing to take women's rights seriously, and called for clear, time-bound commitments on gender equality ahead of the national elections.

The remarks came at a press conference at the Dhaka Reporters Unity, where Naripokkho presented the full set of outcomes from its 7th National Conference of Women's organisations.

Naripokkho President Gita Das said parties have repeatedly failed to honour their own pledges on women's political representation.

"We campaigned for 33

DEMANDS

Women's rights must move from pledges to action

Ensure 33% women's nomination, direct polls to reserved seats

Stop policies limiting women's work hours

End political use of religion; reform family laws, strengthen equality

limit women's working hours to five hours a day "in honour of women".

"This is not an honour. This is confinement. Women want equal opportunities in national development, not restrictions disguised as care," she said.

Gita called for constitutional reforms, equal family laws and an end to the political use of religion.

The two-day conference, held on November 14-15 at Gonoshasthaya Kendra in Savar, brought together nearly 300 participants from all 64 districts, including grassroots organisers, young activists and district-level leaders.

Kamrun Nahar, programme SEE PAGE 9 COL 1

NAGAD-DRU

Three Star journos win best reporting award 2025



From left, Helemul Alam, Shariful Islam, Dipan Nandy.

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Three journalists from The Daily Star have won the Nagad-DRU Best Reporting Award 2025 in two print media categories.

Shariful Islam and Dipan Nandy jointly received the award in the "Crime and Law and Order Print" category for their investigative report titled "Mia, wife concealed assets in tax returns".

Helemul Alam won in the "Urban Problems and

SEE PAGE 9 COL 6



ROCKET
রকেট
মানবিক ক্ষমতা এবং প্রযোগী ব্যবস্থা
সরকারি রকেট

সরকারি
সব শিক্ষা উন্নয়ন টাকা
সহজেই নিন
রকেট-এ

নিরাপদে নিশ্চিতে ঘরে বসে উন্নয়ন টাকা
পাওয়ার জন্য আজই নিজ নিজ শিক্ষা প্রতিষ্ঠানে
আপনার রকেট নাম্বারটি নিবন্ধন করুন।

Media leaders call for self-regulation to protect press freedom

CITY DESK

The news media industry must take the lead in establishing a structured, industry-driven system for self-regulation to safeguard press freedom, strengthen accountability, rebuild public trust, and uphold high journalistic standards, said speakers at a consultation.

The issue was raised during three meetings organised by the Media Resources Development Initiative (MRDI), engaging stakeholders from across the country, according to a press release.

Editors, newsroom leaders, journalists, union and association leaders, media development practitioners, academia, and civil society representatives attended the consultations on "Media self-regulation in Bangladesh: Legal frameworks, global practices and pathways to accountability" held on October 8 and 15, 2025, in Dhaka.

They called on news organisations to formally adopt ethical and operational standards and emphasised that self-regulation must be adopted as the central framework guiding the news media industry.

44 AL men arrested in Cumilla

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Cumilla

Police have arrested 44 leaders and activists of the Awami League and its associate bodies from Cumilla.

Among them, 29 were arrested from the Tomsom Bridge, Jhautola and Badurtala areas of the city along with sharp weapons, including machetes, hand bombs and crude bombs around 6:00am yesterday, said Mahinul Islam, officer-in-charge of Kotwali Model Police Station.

According to police, the group had gathered to mobilise for a protest scheduled for today centring the verdict in a case against ousted prime minister Sheikh Hasina.

The OC said Cumilla District Police remained on alert, similar to the rest of the country, to prevent sabotage, arson and vandalism.

In separate operations elsewhere in the district, police arrested 15 AL leaders and activists on Saturday night, the OC said.



Passengers remain stranded at Nathullabad Bus Terminal in Barishal yesterday, while others resort to three-wheelers and pay extra fare to reach their destinations. Bus services stayed suspended in the city after a clash between students and transport workers on Saturday over half fare.

PHOTO: TITU DAS

Groundwater depleting fast in Cox's Bazar

MOKAMMEL SHUVO, Cox's Bazar

Groundwater levels are depleting rapidly across almost all upazilas in Cox's Bazar, raising fears of an acute water crisis in the near future.

According to the Department of Public Health Engineering, the situation is most severe in Cox's Bazar municipality, Ukhia, and Teknaf.

Uncontrolled extraction and unplanned management have caused groundwater levels in Cox's Bazar municipality to drop by 6-14 feet annually, says a DPHE report. In areas like Kolatoli and Teknaf, water is now found at depths of 90-110 feet.

Severe water shortages persist in Wards 3, 4, 5, and 6 of the municipality. Many residents are forced to collect water from distant areas or buy it. Tube-well water has high salinity and is suitable only for bathing and household chores, while residents complain that water supplied by the municipality is of poor quality and has a foul smell.

DPHE officials estimate that around 30,000 deep and shallow tube-wells are operational across the district.

Usain Chi, 60, of Boro Bazar, said, "After the 1991 cyclone, the groundwater here became saline, and it has worsened since then. Finding fresh water is now our biggest challenge."

Mang Su Prue, owner of a five-storey building in the same area, said, "Even after drilling 400 feet deep, I couldn't find fresh water. The municipal water supply smells bad and isn't fit for drinking."

The situation in Ukhia and Teknaf, near the Rohingya camps, is even more alarming due to excessive extraction. In parts

20-40 feet in Chakaria, and 12-40 feet in Pekua, with annual declines averaging 2-5 feet.

Mayaz said although there are no permanent observation wells yet, 28 monitoring wells have been installed in Ukhia and Teknaf under the World Bank-supported EMCRP project.

In addition, 32 mini-pipe



Many in Cox's Bazar are now forced to purchase bottled water due to groundwater depletion.

PHOTO: STAR

of Rajapalong and Palongkhali unions of Ukhia, water is now found at depths of 100-110 feet, dropping 8-14 feet annually, said Md Ibne Mayaz Pramanik, executive engineer of DPHE in Cox's Bazar.

Water is now found at 40-60 feet in Jhilonjia and Bharuakhali in Sadar upazila, 25-45 feet in Eidgaon, 20-28 feet in Ramu,

schemes are being equipped with real-time data loggers to provide regular data from the next dry season. A groundwater monitoring project is also underway in Cox's Bazar, Ukhia, and Teknaf with support from Dhaka University and Unicef.

"Effective steps, including rainwater harvesting, increased use of surface water, and

groundwater recharge initiatives, are needed urgently to prevent future crisis," he warned.

Due to the alarming depletion, Cox's Bazar's water supply system is under severe strain.

Rubel Barua, assistant engineer of the municipality, said, "Our nine pump houses were set up in 2011-12. Since then, the water table has kept falling. Earlier we could find water at 150-200 feet, but now even at 1,200-1,500 feet it's difficult."

"The water we get is of poor quality, foul smelling, and unfit for use. Most private tube-wells no longer work, which puts strain on municipal supply. We're now trying to supply water twice a day from the few pumps that still work," he said.

As a long-term solution, the municipality is turning to surface water treatment.

"The surface water treatment plant on the Bankkhali river will become the main source of safe water in future. Its commissioning work is underway and it's expected to be fully operational by late December or early January," said Barua.

Abul Mansur, assistant engineer of DPHE in Cox's Bazar, said the plant would be able to treat around 10 lakh litres of water hourly.

"We hope that once it becomes operational, it alone can meet up to 55 percent of the municipality's water demand," he added.

Clash over half fare halts bus operations in Barishal

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Barishal

Bus operations on all routes, including those to Dhaka, remained suspended from Barishal's Nathullabad Bus Terminal yesterday following a clash between transport workers and students over half fare.

The suspension began on Saturday evening and was still continuing till last reported yesterday evening.

The sudden halt caused immense suffering as hundreds of passengers were left stranded at the terminal since morning. "No buses left the terminal for any destination since morning," said Hira

Paik, a transport worker. Only a few BRTC buses were seen operating.

On Saturday evening, a violent clash broke out at the terminal between students and transport workers over a fare dispute, leaving at least 50 people from both sides injured. More than 50 buses and several ticket counters were vandalised.

Traffic on the Dhaka-Barishal-Kuakata highway near the terminal remained halted for about two hours until army personnel intervened to bring the situation under control and resume vehicular movement.

With no buses leaving the terminal, many passengers resorted to smaller vehicles such as three wheelers, paying higher fares to reach their destinations.

Farida Begum, who came to the terminal with her husband and child to travel to Faridpur, said, "We have been waiting since 9:00am. We didn't know the buses wouldn't run." Abdur Rahman, a Dhaka-bound passenger, said he waited at the terminal for two hours before returning home.

Students said the clash erupted after an argument with a bus supervisor over half fare, leaving several students injured. They denied the allegation of vandalism.

Bus Owners' Group President Mir Mosharraf Hossain claimed nearly 100 buses were damaged, causing losses of Tk 3-4 crore, while around 50 ticket counters were vandalised and at least 50 workers injured.

Order on S Alam's renunciation of Bangladeshi citizenship stayed

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday stayed a government decision that accepted the renunciation application of Bangladeshi nationality of S Alam Group owner Mohammed Saiful Alam on July 19, 2020.

The HC order means that Saiful Alam is a Bangladeshi citizen.

The court also issued a rule asking the government to explain why it should not be directed to take necessary steps through diplomatic means for extradition of Saiful Alam from Singapore and/or elsewhere for compelling him to repay liabilities of the banks and also to face pending criminal charges.

In the rule, the court asked the government to show cause why their inaction to bring him (Saiful) back to Bangladesh to compel him to repay liabilities of the banks and also to face criminal charges should not be declared illegal.

The bench of Justice Sikder Mahmudur Razi and Justice Razuddin Ahmed came up with the order and rule following a writ petition filed by Islami

SEE PAGE 9 COL 5

**Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Office of the Upazila Health & Family Planning Officer
Dakshin Surma Upazila Health Complex
Email: southsurma@uhfpo.dghs.gov.bd**

Ref No. UHC/Surma/e-Tender/2025-26/785

Date: 16-11-2025

Re-Tender Notice

This is an online Tender, where only e-Tenders will be accepted in e-GP Portal and no offline/ Hard copies will be accepted. To submit e-tender, please register on e-GP system portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>). For more details, please contact support desk contract numbers.

e-Tender are invited in e-GP system portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) by Dr. MD. SALAHUDDIN MIA, UH&FPO, Dakshin Surma Upazila Health Complex, Sylhet. for the Procurement of;

| Tender Id | Name of Goods | Tender/Proposal Last Selling Date & Time | Tender/Proposal Closing/Opening Date & Time |
|-----------|---|--|---|
| 1177699 | Procurement of Medicine (Non EDCL) for the F.Y 2025-2026 at Dakshin Surma Upazila Health Complex, Sylhet. | 24-Nov-2025 11:00 | 24-Nov-2025 14:00 |
| 1177702 | Procurement of Medical Equipment for the F.Y 2025-2026 at Dakshin Surma Upazila Health Complex, Sylhet. | 24-Nov-2025 11:00 | 24-Nov-2025 14:00 |

e-Tender details can be downloaded on e-GP system portal ([https://www.eprocure.gov.bd](http://www.eprocure.gov.bd)) for pursuer. re-Tender will be accepted only as stated in above list; accepted tenders will be opened online immediate as stated in above list.


(Dr. MD. SALAHUDDIN MIA)
Upazila Health & Family Planning Officer
Dakshin Surma, Sylhet.

GD-2450

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh

Dhaka Mohila Polytechnic Institute

Office of The Principal

email: dhakampi1985@gmail.com

web: www.dmpi.polytech.gov.bd

e-Tender Notice

তারিখ: ১৬.১১.২০২৫

চারক নং-২৭০৩, ২৬৮০, ২০৪, ৬৩, ০৩, ২৫- ২০৪

e-Tenders are invited through e-GP portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) by Principal, Dhaka Mohila Polytechnic Institute under the Directorate of Technical Education for the procurement of following package

Which will be available at e-GP website (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) from date and time as follows:

| Tender Id | Description | Publication date Closing Date |
|--------------------------------------|--|---|
| 1170210, DMP/OTM/2025-26/e-GP_1/192 | Supply of Books | 18-Nov-2025 10:00:00 , 03-Dec-2025 12:00:00 |
| 1170212, DMP/OTM/2025-26/e-GP_2/193 | Computer Accessories | 18-Nov-2025 10:00:00 , 03-Dec-2025 12:00:00 |
| 1170214, DMP/OTM/2025-26/e-GP_3/194 | Supply of Office stationary | 18-Nov-2025 10:00:00 , 03-Dec-2025 12:00:00 |
| 1170215, DMP/OTM/2025-26/e-GP_4/195 | Supply of Raw Materials | 18-Nov-2025 10:00:00 , 03-Dec-2025 12:00:00 |
| 1170218, DMP/OTM/2025-26/e-GP_5/196 | Supply of Sports Materials | 18-Nov-2025 10:00:00 , 03-Dec-2025 12:00:00 |
| 1170220, DMP/OTM/2025-26/e-GP_6/197 | Supply of Engineering and other equipment for Multipurpose Workshop | 18-Nov-2025 10:00:00 , 09-Dec-2025 12:00:00 |
| 1170221, DMP/OTM/2025-26/e-GP_7/198 | Supply of Engineering and other equipment for Animation Visualization lab. | 8-Nov-2025 10:00:00 , 09-Dec-2025 12:00:00 |
| 1170223, DMP/OTM/2025-26/e-GP_8/199 | Supply of Engineering and other equipment for digital Electronics Lab. | 18-Nov-2025 10:00:00 , 09-Dec-2025 12:00:00 |
| 1170226, DMP/OTM/2025-26/e-GP_9/200 | Supply of Office Equipment | 18-Nov-2025 10:00:00 , 03-Dec-2025 12:00:00 |
| 1170228, DMP/OTM/2025-26/e-GP_10/201 | Supply of Educational and learning Aides. | 18-Nov-2025 10:00:00 , 03-Dec-2025 12:00:00 |
| 1170230, DMP/OTM/2025-26/e-GP_11/202 | Supply of Furniture | 18-Nov-2025 10:00:00 , 09-Dec-2025 12:00:00 |

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(Md. Khorshed Alam)

Principal

Dhaka Mohila Polytechnic Institute.
Shere-E-Bangla Nagar Dhaka-1207.

SOUTH LEBANON

Israeli forces open fire on UN peacekeepers

AFP, Beirut

The United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) said yesterday that Israeli soldiers had shot at its peacekeepers from a tank near an army position in the country's south.

UNIFIL has been working with the Lebanese army to consolidate a truce between Israel and the Lebanese militant group Hezbollah reached last November.

"This morning, the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) fired on UNIFIL peacekeepers from a Merkava tank from near a position Israel has



established in Lebanese territory," the peacekeepers said in a statement, adding heavy machine gun rounds hit about five metres from their personnel.

The force said the peacekeepers were able to "leave safely thirty minutes later" after the tank withdrew inside the Israeli position. UNIFIL said the shooting "represents a serious violation of UN Security Council resolution 1701", which ended a 2006 conflict between Israel and Hezbollah, and also formed the basis of last November's truce.

That ceasefire sought to end more than a year of hostilities between the parties that broke out after the start of the Gaza war.

Under the deal, Israel was to withdraw its forces from south Lebanon, but it has kept them at five areas it deems strategic.



Displaced Palestinians travel with their belongings on the back of a vehicle on a rainy day in the central Gaza Strip yesterday. Heavy rains flooded tents in makeshift camps in Gaza City, as the United Nations warned that Israeli restrictions on aid have left hundreds of thousands of families without adequate shelter. Since the start of the ceasefire agreement last month, at least 266 people have been killed and 635 wounded in Israeli attacks.

PHOTO: REUTERS

Ukraine strikes Russia's oil refinery

Says military; Moscow troops advance in Zaporizhzhia region

REUTERS, Kyiv

Ukraine's military said on Saturday it had struck Russia's Ryazan oil refinery, adding that multiple explosions and a large fire had been observed at the site.

No further details about the strike were provided in the military's statement on Facebook. Ryazan is located about 200 km (125 miles) southeast of Moscow.

Ukraine has regularly hit Russian oil refineries with its drones, seeking to degrade Moscow's capacity to finance its full scale invasion launched in February 2022.

Russia said yesterday that its forces had moved forward sharply in Ukraine's south-eastern Zaporizhzhia region, taking two settlements as part of a major push aimed at taking control of the entire Zaporizhzhia region.

With a smaller army than Russia's, Ukraine has been grappling with how to bolster defences in the Donetsk

region while keeping the rest of the front stable under intense artillery and drone attack from highly mobile Russian units.

Since advancing into the Dnipropetrovsk region in late June, Russian forces have been pushing there and in the neighbouring Zaporizhzhia region where its forces have moved forward along a relatively broad front by at least 30 km (19 miles) over the past six weeks, according to pro-Ukrainian maps.

Russia's defence ministry said that its forces had taken Mala Toknachka and Rivnopolilla, which put the southern towns of Huliaipole and Orikhiv in danger of being the target of Russian pincer movements.

Meanwhile, Ukraine and Greece signed an agreement in Athens yesterday for the provision of US-supplied liquefied natural gas (LNG) to Kiev throughout the winter months.



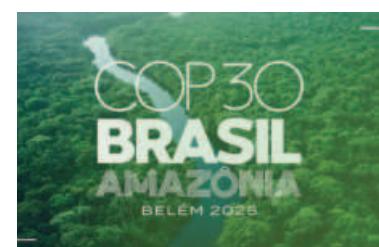
China finds bigger role as US sidesteps COP30 climate summit

REUTERS, Belém

With the United States absent from the UN annual international climate summit for the first time in three decades, China is stepping into the limelight as a leader in the fight against global warming.

Its country pavilion dominates the entrance hall of the sprawling COP30 conference grounds in Brazil's Amazon city of Belém, executives from its biggest clean energy companies are presenting their visions for a green future to large audiences in English, and its diplomats are working behind the scenes to ensure constructive talks.

Those were Washington's roles, but they now reside with Beijing. "Water flows to where there is space, and diplomacy often does



the same," Francesco La Camera, director general at the International Renewable Energy Agency, told Reuters.

He said China's dominance in renewable energy and electric vehicles was bolstering its position in climate diplomacy.

China's transformation from a quiet presence at the UN's Conference of the Parties summits

to a more central player seeking the world's attention reflects a shift in the fight against global warming since US President Donald Trump's return to office.

Long a skeptic of climate change, Trump has again pulled the United States - the world's largest historic emitter - from the landmark international Paris Agreement to limit global warming. This year, for the first time ever, he declined to send an official high-level delegation to represent US interests at the summit.

"President Trump will not jeopardize our country's economic and national security to pursue vague climate goals that are killing other countries," White House spokeswoman Taylor Rogers told Reuters.

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Stop the surge of violence urgently

Re-arrest criminal gang leaders, stop proliferation of illegal weapons

We condemn the recent spate of violence seemingly orchestrated as part of Awami League's "Dhaka lockdown" and nationwide "shutdown" programmes, in reaction to the International Crimes Tribunal's announcement of the verdict date in a case against Sheikh Hasina. In five days since Tuesday, more than 30 arson attacks—mostly targeting buses—and crude bomb blasts took place, with two deaths reported. Comments made by members of the AL on social media, alluding to the "success" of the programmes, indicate that the party has been involved in instigating these vicious acts. A driver was burnt alive and a passenger severely injured when a parked bus was set on fire in Mymensingh on Tuesday. Such acts are deplorable, suggesting that the AL, far from being repentant for its horrific role in the killing of over 1,400 people during the mass uprising, continues on a path of creating fear among citizens.

The violence has persisted, with several crude bombs detonated in Dhaka on Saturday, alongside arson attacks in three districts. According to a news report, police have arrested four activists of the AL and its affiliated bodies for allegedly engaging in these violent acts. Although law enforcement agencies are on high alert, with the government beefing up security in various locations, there is apprehension that further violence may occur following Monday's verdict in the case against Sheikh Hasina on charges of crimes against humanity.

While the absconding leaders of the AL, whose political activities have been banned, appear to be instigating the violence through their supporters, other factors have also increased the likelihood of violence ahead of the national elections. A report in this daily revealed how leaders of the underworld, either recently released from prison or returning from abroad, have become very active, resulting in the recent spate of killings, extortion, and armed clashes in general. Most concerning is that police have received intelligence suggesting that underworld gangs could be hired as "muscle" during the elections to intimidate voters and attack rival campaigners. The possibility that the AL may also employ these criminals to create chaos during the elections cannot be ruled out.

It is disturbing to note that several notorious criminals have been released from jails since the uprising, while others have dared to return from abroad to resume their activities and "reclaim territory." More than 1,300 firearms were looted from police stations during the uprising, many still unaccounted for. In addition, there has been a reported increase in illegal firearms entering the country through various border areas.

The government must, therefore, act swiftly to re-arrest identified criminals, initiate targeted operations to recover illegal firearms, and stop their influx across border points. Unless urgent steps are taken, violent crimes will continue, and the situation will become increasingly difficult to control.

We need more women in politics

Meaningful democracy demands more than symbolic inclusion

It is frustrating that despite the promises of last year's July uprising, where women played a key role, they continue to be systematically sidelined from political power. Over the past year, their participation has also declined across various sectors. A recent discussion organised by a newly formed platform called Women in Democracy has again highlighted this troubling reality. Sadly, the July National Charter has also failed to address women's rights or their political participation in a meaningful way.

Patriarchal dominance has, in fact, intensified since 2024, as speakers at the event noted. Harassment of women in public and digital spaces has reportedly increased, but political parties have shown little interest in taking up this cause. Women who entered politics after the uprising also face an increasingly hostile environment, ranging from cyberbullying to social pressure. This is most evident in the ongoing debate over women's parliamentary representation. The Election Reform Commission had proposed 100 reserved seats filled through rotation-based direct elections, a system that could have given women genuine democratic legitimacy. However, the National Consensus Commission rejected this proposal, and the July National Charter retained only 50 reserved seats (gradually increasing to 100), mandating that parties nominate just five percent women in general seats (rising to 33 percent by 2043). When women constitute half of the population, can offering them only five percent representation in parliament truly be considered democratic?

Unfortunately, our political parties seem to remain largely indifferent to women's political participation. The BNP's nomination of only ten female candidates, including its Chairperson Khaleda Zia, for the upcoming national election is a case in point. Reports also suggest that no party has taken meaningful steps to end the long-standing suppression of women activists and leaders within their internal structures.

Direct elections are crucial because they grant women independence, visibility, and legitimacy, none of which symbolic quotas can deliver. At the national conference of the Forum for Women's Political Rights (FWPR) held on October 9, activists rightly demanded that all political parties be legally required to nominate at least 33 percent female candidates, gradually rising to 50 percent, through amendments to the Representation of the People Order (RPO). Because without binding legislation, parties will continue to prioritise rhetoric over real change.

The July uprising ignited hopes among people to end exclusion, discrimination, and undemocratic practices. Yet the reforms enacted since then have fallen short of creating the inclusive democratic culture that people demanded. We urge all political parties, particularly major ones like the BNP, to include more women in decision-making positions. Unless women's participation within parties and their representation in parliament increase significantly, meaningful change in our political culture will remain elusive.

If the state cannot govern, violence will



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KAZI A S M NURUL HUDA

Bangladesh is facing a crisis that extends far beyond the headlines. The show of violence unfolding in many parts of the country is not simply a failure of security. It is a sign that the moral foundations of political authority are weakening irrevocably. A society remains stable only when its citizens believe that disagreements can be settled through established means and institutions rather than fear. Once that belief falters, violence becomes a language through which political actors negotiate power. That shift is again visible in Bangladesh.

The burning alive of a bus driver in Mymensingh, the crude bomb and arson attacks in Dhaka and other parts of the country over the past week, with one person injured in the capital even on early Sunday morning, the targeting of religious and civic institutions, and the firebombing of Grameen Bank branches reveal a political landscape where violence is beginning to replace deliberation as the mechanism through which groups seek influence.

From the social media posts by Awami League, whose activities have been banned since May 12, it appears that they are partly responsible for this violence. A party that ruled for 15 and a half years through repression, enforced disappearances, and the slow corrosion of dissent now behaves like an underground network directing a "Dhaka Lockdown." Toppled by a mass uprising, it has no political or moral standing to behave as if it still commands the streets. Yet, AL dares to make lockdown calls, clearly understanding that it will trigger arson, blockades, and disruption at a moment when the country faces a fragile transition. To describe this as a "political programme" conceals the truth; it is an attempt to maintain relevance regardless of the cost paid by citizens.

However, others are also contributing to the volatility of the situation. Bangladesh is now operating in a political environment shaped by multiple actors, each responding to its own desired incentives. Several political forces, including BNP, NCP, Jamaat and other Islamist parties, student groups, and anti-Awami League coalitions declared that they would resist the lockdown call, creating a crowded and volatile civic space. Moving beneath this surface are criminal intermediaries, local strongmen, and

opportunistic networks that require no formal sanction from any party and thrive when politics spills onto the streets. At such a phase, violence stops belonging to any single organisation and becomes dispersed, strategic, and far more difficult to contain. If the February election falters or is pushed off course, it will inevitably benefit those who gain from prolonged

The previous regime normalised coercion as a central tool of governance. Its fall removed the government but not the political culture it created, resulting in a landscape where partisan networks, criminal groups, and disillusioned actors operate with impunity. The interim government's repeated assurances about the rule of law have not yet produced the social conditions that make law authoritative. A teenager was detained on suspicion, while the perpetrators responsible for arson, sabotage, and bomb attacks continue to slip away in most cases. Citizens cannot trust a democratic transition if the state cannot guarantee basic public safety. The days surrounding November 13, when Sheikh Hasina's trial verdict date was announced, exposed these vulnerabilities clearly.

and bombings can suppress voter turnout, undermine civic confidence, and restrict campaigning and public engagement. A vote conducted in fear is not a mandate. A referendum held under threat is not consent. A transition shaped by these forces loses its democratic character.

Bangladesh still has a path away from this precipice. The interim government must re-establish credible authority through visible and impartial enforcement. Those responsible for arson, sabotage, attacks on schools and religious sites, or the use of crude explosives must face consequences without regard to affiliation. Political forces must recognise that counter-mobilisation deepens the spiral of confrontation. The ousted party must not have the chance to use instability



PHOTO: COLLECTED

Violence in Bangladesh is beginning to replace deliberation as the mechanism through which groups seek influence.

instability.

The interim government must also confront the weaknesses it has allowed to persist. Its response to the apparently planned attacks in different parts of the country over the last week signals anxiety rather than control. While the security measures taken are understandable given the circumstances, they also reveal a government bracing for threats it struggles to deter. A state supported by the military, Rab, and BGB would not be repeatedly outpaced by small groups armed with improvised explosives if the investigative and intelligence capacity of law enforcers worked properly. Instead, their credibility continues to erode as selective enforcement and political calculation still shape institutional behaviour.

Some of the attacks also carry layered meaning. The attacks on Grameen Bank branches, which are woven into Bangladesh's global identity and linked to the chief adviser, are not an ordinary incident. When attackers can break windows, pour petrol, ignite flames, and disappear before anyone reacts, they are not only destroying property; they are testing the state's capacity to defend the institutions that express national identity.

The deepest danger lies in the collapse of deterrence. Violence spreads when perpetrators believe they will not be caught. Every stalled investigation, every unidentified gunman, or every night of evasion reinforces that belief. With the February election approaching, the moral and political stakes grow sharper. Fear, sabotage,

as a strategic resource.

This moment is not only about the February election. It concerns the future of the political community itself. Democratic institutions do not collapse overnight. They erode slowly and then suddenly. Bangladesh is approaching that threshold. Or perhaps it has already crossed it. If the state does not act with clarity, fairness and moral seriousness, the election will become symbolic rather than substantive. Real power will drift toward those prepared to deploy violence.

The work of political life is to preserve the conditions under which citizens can disagree without fear. That is the task before Bangladesh now. The stakes are nothing less than the survival of order, legitimacy, and the possibility of democratic governance.

Identity wars across the border



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ARMAN AHMED

When Sheikh Hasina's long reign finally ended in 2024, Bangladesh found itself at an uncertain crossroads not just of leadership but also of identity. The void she left behind has seen the familiar symbols of Islamic politics resurface with increasingly assertive confidence. What was once confined to the periphery of religious activism is now finding its way into mainstream political conversation. And while this development owes partly to fatigue with what some view as Hasina's secular authoritarianism, it also carries the shadow of a larger regional transformation: the rise of Hindutva in India.

To understand this resurgence, one must first understand the paradox of Hasina's secularism. During the course of her rule, Awami League "transformed" secularism from an ideal of freedom into a rhetoric of control. It came to be associated with censorship, patronage, and the systematic weakening of any political opposition.

When power became contrast feels almost inevitable. If India is unashamedly Hindu, why should Bangladesh not be proudly Muslim? If our neighbours can blend faith with nationhood, why must we keep away from our own religious heritage? These are not militant questions; they are identity questions, but they are precisely the kind of questions that Islamist politics thrives on. The danger

image, provided a counter-narrative: faith as justice, religion as purity, and politics as moral restoration. But this internal crisis has been quietly amplified by what has been happening across the border.

As India wraps itself in the saffron robe of majoritarian nationalism, the ideological heat radiates beyond its territory. Bangladesh is often receptive or vulnerable to Hindutva's language of cultural supremacy, which asserts that India's soul is "intrinsically" Hindu and that minorities must either adapt or fade. Here, it stirs both anger and anxiety. Each time an Indian leader invokes the term "Hindu-Shashtra," or a television channel in Delhi debates "Bangladeshi infiltrators," the emotional boundary between the two nations hardens. And in that tightening, the call for Islamic identity in Bangladesh finds further strength.

For many young Bangladeshis, the contrast feels almost inevitable. If India is unashamedly Hindu, why should Bangladesh not be proudly Muslim? If our neighbours can blend faith with nationhood, why must we keep away from our own religious heritage? These are not militant questions; they are identity questions, but they are precisely the kind of questions that Islamist politics thrives on. The danger

is not in the question itself, but in the answers that populists are waiting to provide. The politics of reaction has long been a South Asian trait; we define ourselves by what we are not or what we stand against. In the 1970s, Bangladesh defined itself against Pakistan's theocracy. Today, it risks defining itself against India's Hindutva. The two stances mirror each other more than either side would admit. Each claims to protect faith from persecution, and each uses that fear to consolidate power. The saffron in Delhi feeds off the green in Dhaka, and vice versa. The border has thus become a mirror reflecting their extremes.

Social media has intensified this cycle. Hindutva-linked accounts amplify stories of "Hindu persecution" in Bangladesh, often distorted or fabricated, to fuel outrage at home. In response, Islamist voices in Bangladesh share clips of Indian mobs attacking Muslims, portraying them as proof that secularism is a lie and that only an Islamic order can ensure dignity. Each side validates the other's deepest suspicions in a digital duet of resentment.

None of this is to absolve Bangladesh of its responsibilities. The rise of Islamic politics here is rooted, to a large extent, in domestic discontent emanating from unemployment, inequality, corruption, and the absence of credible secular leadership.

But to ignore the external dimension is to miss half the story. Majoritarianism, like any ideology of exclusion, is contagious. When a community asserts religious supremacy, its neighbours feel compelled to do the same. In South Asia's fragile mosaic, identity insecurity spreads faster than ideology itself.

The tragedy is that both nations once shared a vision of pluralism where faith coexisted with freedom, and culture transcended creed. Bengal's history is full of saints, poets, and reformers who championed a syncretic ethos that bound Hindu and Muslim communities in a shared cultural life. Today, however, the bridges built over centuries are being dismantled, and increasingly replaced by walls of rhetoric and flags of faith. But identity imposed by fear and intimidation is no identity at all.

For Bangladesh, the path ahead is delicate. It cannot afford to let the failure of one secular elite hand victory to another form of absolutism. Nor can it remain blind to the ways regional politics shape domestic sentiments. True secularism must be rebuilt from within through justice, accountability, principled politics, and respect for faith, but without surrendering to it as a state.

For India, too, there is a warning. Hindutva's triumphalism may rally votes, but it corrodes the region's delicate balance. The more India defines itself by exclusion, the more it empowers its neighbours' exclusionary politics in return. A Hindu India and an Islamist Bangladesh are not opposites; they are reflections of the same insecurities, dressed in different colours.

South Asia does not need another partition of the mind. What it needs is an honest reckoning with the dangerous symmetry that has emerged across its borders. Until both nations learn that faith cannot be the foundation of citizenship and that pride cannot replace pluralism, the crescent and the saffron will continue to glare at each other, serving neither nation's future.

BBC's speech-edit crisis and lessons for us



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KAMAL AHMED

As a former BBC journalist, it is excruciating to watch heads roll over a lapse in editorial standards at an institution that thrived for 103 years in Britain. What is even more shocking is that the BBC's persistent bias towards Israel during the Gaza war—including its repeated suppression of genocide allegations—never triggered resignations. Yet, a single edited speech by a US president, unnoticed by him or his supporters for more than a year, has forced out not one but two of the corporation's most senior executives.

A comprehensive review by the Centre for Media Monitoring (CMM) of the BBC's coverage of Israel's war on Gaza found that presenters amplified Israeli perspectives 2,340 times, compared with only 217 Palestinian viewpoints—a stark imbalance. Editorial failures undoubtedly are reprehensible, but when politics and other interests come into play, it becomes an existential question.

Ironically, the Trump edit was first uncovered by the BBC's own internal audit. Once a memo about the audit leaked, the story exploded into public view. The Panorama episode containing the doctored speech was never even broadcast in the United States. Nonetheless, President Trump—who has cultivated a reputation for litigiousness—has decided to sue the BBC for defamation, reportedly seeking between one and five billion dollars, despite the corporation's formal admission of error and apology.

The BBC, one of Britain's most revered institutions, has become so vast and its portfolio so diverse that controversy is almost unavoidable. In recent years, it has generated more headlines about itself than almost any other media organisation. Its scandals have included Martin Bashir's deception of Princess Diana's brother to secure her 1995

A 2020 Reuters survey found that 56 percent of US respondents also considered it trustworthy. Still, the latest breach—splicing together two comments Donald Trump made 50 minutes apart on January 6, 2021, the day of the Capitol attack—has plunged the corporation into crisis. Managing director Tim Davie and head of news Deborah Turness both resigned after a leaked memo revealed that the edit was misleading.

London issued an unusually strong statement following the resignations, accusing the BBC—particularly BBC Arabic—of distorting reality, omitting vital context, platforming antisemitic and extremist narratives, and contributing to public misinformation and radicalisation.

The BBC's vulnerability stems from its unique structure: a publicly funded institution financed through the licence

the previous Conservative government and Conservative ties among its own leadership. BBC's Chairman Samir Shah has donated to the party, and Tim Davie once stood as a Conservative councillor candidate in a London borough.

Several British and US outlets reported that when the internal memo leaked via the right-leaning *Telegraph*, senior BBC leaders initially delayed acknowledging the error due to resistance from a board member, who argued for a more sweeping admission. That board member was identified as Robbie Gibb—former communications director to former Prime Minister Theresa May, long-time BBC senior editor, adviser to GB News (often characterised as the UK's Fox News), and a figure connected to the 2020 purchase of the *Jewish Chronicle*. Gibb has declined public comment. Sir Ed Davey, the leader of the third largest party in parliament, the Liberal Democrats, has called for his removal from the BBC board.

This crisis arrives at a perilous moment, with the next licence fee settlement due in 2027. Critics of the BBC are already preparing to use the controversy to influence those negotiations. Sensing the danger, MP Stella Creasy has called for mutualising the BBC to protect it from "interference by partisan elites." The BBC's predicament underscores the growing importance of media ownership to the public interest. Corporations seek ever greater sway over media narratives, while political actors attempt to weaken public institutions or capture them by appointing ideological allies. For decades, the BBC was celebrated as a global model of independent, impartial public broadcasting. This scandal lays bare just how fragile that independence has become.

There are lessons for us as well. Half-measures will fail: politicians and commercial rivals will always exploit vulnerabilities within public media. Our own Media Reform Commission has proposed credible safeguards to protect the autonomy of state-owned media—particularly regarding board composition—and these recommendations should be fully implemented. Transparency in ownership and robust accountability in governance must be treated as urgent priorities.



VISUAL: ANWAR SOHEL

interview; allegations of sexual harassment against a co-presenter of *MasterChef*; racist remarks from another presenter of the programme; and the failure to cut away from live Glastonbury coverage when crowds chanted for the killing of Israeli Defence Force soldiers.

Yet despite such debacles, the BBC remains Britain's most trusted news organisation.

Their departures were all but inevitable—driven not only by the threat of litigation but also by sustained political pressure, largely from the right-wing forces. For those seeking control over political narratives, the BBC represents both an obstacle and an opportunity; its missteps are seized upon to advance partisan and commercial interests. It is notable that the Israeli embassy in

fee, the level of which is set once every ten years. This arrangement limits direct government control, frustrating political actors and commercial competitors who view the BBC's guaranteed funding as an unfair advantage. Although the corporation enjoys broad public support, fringe groups on the right often portray it as excessively liberal, despite a board largely appointed by

COP30 must confront the climate displacement crisis



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KANAN PURKAYASTHA

persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality and is unable, or owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country." This definition does not include those permanently displaced across borders due to climate breakdown. This is a problem because this means that those forced to leave their country as a consequence of climate breakdown cannot legally be called "refugees". Some suggest that they must be classed as "climate migrants". However, "refugee" status confers certain rights, which "migrant" status does not.

In *The State of the World's Refugees: In Search of Solidarity*, published in 2012, former UN secretary-general Ban Ki-moon noted that the traditional causes of forced displacement—conflict and human rights abuses—are now increasingly intertwined with and compounded by other factors, and many of them relate to the relentless advance of climate change. So, the migration

related to climate change is complicated and has a snowball effect. For example, climate migrants from African nations arrive in Southern Europe, but because of widespread drought and crop failure, displacement occurs in Greece, Southern Italy and Spain. So, the migrants face multiple displacements.

The World Bank estimates that 216 million people will be internally displaced by 2050 due to slow-onset climate events like droughts. This prediction excludes Europe and North America, as well as displacement caused by extreme weather. Therefore, the actual number is likely to be much higher. Considering all factors, the Institute for Economics and Peace (IEP) suggests that 1.2 billion people could be displaced by 2060 as a result of climate breakdown, increasing to two billion by 2100. According to the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC), weather-related displacement in 2020 reached nearly 31 million, including multiple migrations.

In 2021, the US National Intelligence Council assessment identified eleven countries and two regions as being especially vulnerable to climate instability. Almost half of the nations are in South and East Asia, including Pakistan, India and Afghanistan. The two regions that have been recognised as the world's most vulnerable to climate breakdown are Central Africa and the small island states of the Pacific. Another hotspot is Central America, where a combination of extreme poverty, climate breakdown and gang violence is driving the growing unrest.

Think about the Sahel region in Africa, which is situated directly south of the Sahara Desert. The land stretches almost 5,500 kilometres from the Atlantic Ocean in the west to the Red Sea in the east. The key countries in the region include Senegal, Mali, Niger, Chad and Sudan. In this region, climate breakdown driven by global warming impacts conflict in two ways. One is magnifying the scale of ongoing hostilities. Another is by acting as a driver of new conflict as a consequence of mass migration or water shortages.

The sea level rise within the next eighty years will have a serious impact on developed countries as well. A major part of the Florida and Miami population will be displaced. In the UK, it has been predicted that the residents of Lincolnshire will need a new home within the next two decades. By the second half of the century, if the temperature remains 40 degrees Celsius steadily, then the southern and central parts of the UK could well be driving people out of their homes and towards cooler parts of the country. It is to be noted here that a couple of years ago, Israel announced a major national plan on climate change that included a recommendation to build "sea fences" near its maritime borders on the Red Sea and the Mediterranean, linked with impassable barriers on its land borders, to protect against a predicted wave of climate refugees.

The obvious drivers of climate conflict are competition for water and fertile land. But other drivers need to be considered. For example, the world's major fossil fuel

exporters, including Russia and the oil-producing states of the Middle East, suffer major economic problems as the demand for oil and gas falls during the transition to a global economy built upon renewable energy. These economic circumstances will lead to social unrest. Statistics suggest that more than twenty countries, including Chad, Algeria, Iraq and Nigeria's fifty percent of export revenue depends on fossil fuel and their economy could face complete collapse.

The most valuable and essential asset on the planet is water. Climate conflicts emerge from water shortage. South Asian and South-East Asian nations that depend for water and irrigation upon the great rivers that drain the Hindu Kush Himalaya (HKH) will face some consequences. Because rivers in these regions are all fed by the ice that covers the HKH. Together, they supply the water to irrigate crops that feed two billion people across the region. If the glacier disappears because of climate change, then this leads to potentially catastrophic collapse in agriculture from Afghanistan to Pakistan in the west and to Myanmar, Vietnam and China in the east.

In short, the lack of water, extreme heat and sea level rise, even if it occurs on a different schedule, will bring the displacement of people from all impoverished regions to every place where it is possible to escape to. This looming catastrophe leaves no room for delay. The 30th Conference of the Parties must deliver a concrete, coordinated, and immediate response to tackle this crisis head-on.

The 30th Conference of the Parties (COP30) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) started on November 10, 2025 and will continue till November 21 in Belém, Brazil. On November 7 at the COP30 Leaders' Summit in Belém, UN Climate Change Executive Secretary Simon Stiell reflected on the global journey from Rio to Paris and issued a clear call for faster and fairer delivery of climate action and finance. Stiell highlighted how the world's climate response has already changed the trajectory of global warming. He also mentioned that the clean energy transition is now booming, and last year, two trillion dollars flowed into renewables, twice as much as fossil fuels. This is good news for gradual climate change mitigation, but it is unclear how to tackle the current climate refugees and future flashpoints.

Al Gore, in his book *The Future*, mentioned that the fastest-growing new category of refugees is climate refugees. Currently, a "refugee" is defined in international law as someone with "a well-founded fear of being



Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Ministry of Power, Energy and Mineral Resources
Geological Survey of Bangladesh (GSB)
153, Pioneer Road, Segunbagicha
Dhaka-1000.

TENDER NOTICE NO: 28.05.0000.000.231.07.0006.25.464

Date: 16.11.2025

e-TENDER NOTICE Procurement Method : OTM (NCT)

e-tender is invited in the National e-GP system portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) for the Procurement of the following goods

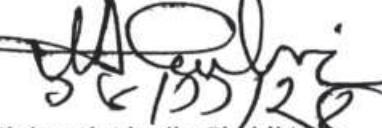
| SL No. | Tender ID | Name of Goods |
|--------|-----------|---|
| 01. | 1165268 | Supply of Cleaning Items and Related Services |

for any information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP System Portal and from e-GP help desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd) no offline/hard copies will be accepted.

Tender Publication Date: 17.11.2025, Time: 12.15

Tender Last Selling Date: 27.11.2025, Time: 10.30

Tender Closing/Opening Date: 27.11.2025, Time: 12.30


 (Minhazul Abedin Shakil)
 Assistant Director (Procurement)
 For Procuring Entity (PE)
 G.S.B., Dhaka.
 Phone: 48314810.

GD-2453

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Department of Fire Service & Civil Defence
Kazi Alauddin Road, Dhaka

Memo No. 58.03.0000.008.07.001.25.12963

Date: 10/11/2025.

e-Tender Notice No: FSCD(Purchase & Store)Leverage Item/2025-2026/01
e-Tender is invited in the National e-GP-system Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) for the procurement of goods as mentioned in the following table:

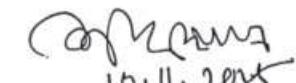
| SL. No. | Tender ID No. | Description | e-Tender Publishing Date & Time | Last Selling Date & Time of e-Tender Document | Closing & Opening Date & Time of e-Tender Document |
|---------|---------------|-----------------|---------------------------------|---|--|
| 01. | 1170260 | TC Combat Cloth | 17.11.2025 at 12.00 pm | 01.12.2025 at 17.00 pm | 02.12.2025 at 12.00 pm |

This is an online Tender where only e-Tenders will be accepted in the national e-GP System portal. No offline/hard copies will be acceptable. To submit e-tender please register in the national e-GP portal system (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>). For more details please contact help desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd).

The fees for downloading the e-tendering documents from the national e-GP Portal have to be deposited online through any registered bank's branches up to 02.12.2025 at 11.00 am.

Note :

- (1) The procuring entity reserves the right to accept or reject any or all tenders without showing any cause.
- (2) Tender notice will also be published in FSCD website www.fireservice.gov.bd


 10.11.2025
 Md. Shahid Atahar Hossain
 Director (Admin & Finance)

GD-2449



RUNA LAILA'S 73RD BIRTHDAY

An icon that transcends music



PHOTOS: COURTESY OF COKE STUDIO BANGLA & COLLECTED



RAKSHANDA RAHMAN MISHA

Growing up, I would listen to Runa Laila on loop on BTV, from *Bondhu Tin Din* to *Istishaner Railgarita*. I even tried to mimic her iconic *Dama Dam Mast Qalandar*, fully convinced that if I practiced enough, I might somehow sound like her. So, you can imagine my excitement when I came across a vinyl copy of her *Superuna* album on Record Store Day last year. I wanted it badly, but I didn't have the money at the time. Instead, I spent the day listening to the tracks from *Superuna* that were available on YouTube.

Runa Laila has always been more than a legendary voice. She is an icon of beauty, style and charisma, someone whose influence has never faded. She still holds a special place in the hearts of young listeners. She is also one of the rare artistes who connects Bangladesh, India and Pakistan through her music, and reminds us why art crosses borders.

Fittingly enough, on the occasion of her birthday today, a rendition of her timeless *Dama Dam Mast Qalandar* was released by Coke Studio Bangla. Envisioned and produced by Shayan Chowdhury Arnob and Adit Rahman, this version beautifully fuses the timeless spirit of Qawwali with the unique textures of Bangladesh's musical heritage.

Whenever you listen to her rendition of the

13th-century Sufi poem, her voice becomes hypnotic and lifts you in a way that feels almost spiritual. Before you even realise it, you find yourself moving with the rhythm.

Runa Laila's influence has inspired not only music lovers, but also artistes and designers. Renowned designer Sabyasachi Mukherjee is a diehard fan and has dedicated a plaque in his Mumbai store to his mother and to the legendary singer. The plaque reads, "Across the

border, in Bangladesh, another woman

I admire wore a similar black and gold with her own chandbalis, cropped hair and sleeveless blouse. The legendary songstress Runa Laila. I was an obsessive fan. Back then, my very strict father allowed me exactly 10 minutes of Doordarshan, just enough time to watch Runa Laila sing *Dama Dam Mast Qalandar*. In 2023, Six Yards Story also launched a special Eid jewellery collection inspired by her iconic songs, including *Shilpi*, *O Mera Babu Chail Chabila*, and *Bondhu Tin Din*, amongst others.

Her film *Shilpi*, directed by Chashi Nazrul Islam, has aged surprisingly well. The film is loosely based on her life, blending real events with fictional elements, and her on-screen chemistry with her husband Alamgir felt so natural that it is hard to take your eyes off. I was mesmerised by her style, from graceful sarees to chic western outfits, which made her look effortlessly timeless.

Runa Laila has also shared her wisdom as a judge on many musical reality shows, including *Sur Kshetra* and *Sa Re Ga Ma Pa*. She also made a special cameo in the Star Jalsha drama *Ke Apon Ke Por* in 2019. Back then, while flipping through channels, I stumbled upon a promo where the distressed protagonist Joba meets Runa Laila on the street. It was such a delightful surprise and a perfect way to celebrate her 67th birthday at the time.

A picture of Runa Laila with Bappi Lahiri in a recording studio, deep in conversation, is used in her biographies to this day. In the 1970s, a vibrant decade for fashion in the newly independent Bangladesh, Runa Laila stood out as one of the main style icons. Her choices, from bell bottom pants to long unkempt hair and loop earrings, brought global trends into the local fashion scene and inspired a whole generation.

Her influence goes beyond music and fashion. She is now the central figure in a new novel, *Mayar Singhasan*, by the acclaimed fiction writer Abdurrahman Al Muktadir. The book explores her rise in Bangladesh's musical landscape, her artistic journey, personal struggles, and lasting cultural impact. The novel was released today, on her birthday, by Chandrabindu Prokashan. In a heartfelt video message, Runa Laila herself invited readers, saying, "This novel is written about me. I hope you will like it. Do read it."

As an unparalleled icon of music celebrates another year, she stuns with how gracefully she ages, carrying her charm and confidence effortlessly. Her journey inspires millions to be stronger, bolder and ultimately a better version of themselves.

NEWS

Bhashani a lasting inspiration

FROM PAGE 2

name in the nation's history, Tarique said this iconic leader always stood firmly for the oppressed and persecuted and through his fearless and decisive leadership, he continuously inspired the people of this country to stand up for their rights.

"Maulana Bhashani will always be remembered as a guiding force in the nation's liberation. He was a shining luminary in Bangladesh's independence movement, in

democratic struggles, and in the fight for the just rights of farmers, workers, and the toiling masses," he observed.

"His thunderous voice shook the thrones of oppressive rulers and exploitative forces. In the nation's darkest times, he stood firmly for the public interest, earning the trust and confidence of the people," he added.

In another message, BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir also paid tribute to the late leader.

3 killed

FROM PAGE 12

will be no Palestinian state," Katz said on X, adding that Gaza would be "demilitarised down to the last tunnel", and Hamas disarmed by the Israeli military in parts of Gaza under its control and by the international stabilisation force or the Israeli military in the rest of the enclave.

The UN Security Council will vote later on Monday on a resolution endorsing US President Donald Trump's Gaza peace plan, reports Reuters.

a pedestrian in front of the Waqf Building, said Sazzad Hossain, inspector (investigation) of Hatirjheel Police Station.

Meanwhile, the Detective Branch of police arrested 10 leaders and activists of the Awami League and its affiliated organisations in 24 hours till yesterday morning for allegedly planning and financing flash processions aimed at stirring unrest in the capital.

A Rab-2 team arrested a man in Mohammadpur with six petrol bombs, a machete, and a gas lighter on charges of preparing for sabotage.

Meanwhile in Gazipur, three petrol bombs were hurled at the Grameen Bank Maona branch in Bartoba Bazar of Sreepur upazila early yesterday.

Several branches of the bank -- an institution linked to Chief Adviser Prof Yunus -- including its Dhaka headquarters, were targeted recently.

Witnesses said seven to eight unidentified youths detonated the bombs around 2:30am before fleeing. One exploded inside the compound and two outside, damaging the gate.

In Feni, helmet-wearing youths poured petrol over and set ablaze the Memorial in Muktibazar area around 3:30am.

In Kushtia, a parked truck was set on fire in Aruapara around the same time. A 51-second video shows two youths setting fire to the truck's rear wheel; one shouting "Joy Bangla" seconds after igniting it.

In Chattogram, several crude bombs said Bulbul.

"Instead, he felt cold metal on his right knee and the sound of a trigger being pulled -- 11 years on, the man still remembers which of his knees was capped at first.

"I heard the sound of a shot being fired, and felt my leg jumping up and then crashing on the ground. Then the same thing happened with my other leg. Then I felt a wetness -- blood -- creeping up my back all the way to my head," recalled Bulbul.

Police then admitted Bulbul to a government hospital in Sathkhira. "The

49th death anniversary of Bhashani today

FROM PAGE 12

Yesteray, a seminar titled "Morality in the Language of Protest: Maulana Bhashani and Contemporary Bangladesh" was held at MBSTU, chaired by its Vice-Chancellor Prof Anwarul Azim Akand. Prof Mohammad Tanzimuddin Khan, a member of the University Grants Commission, was the chief guest at the seminar.

Meanwhile, a seven day (November 11 to 17) fair, known as the Bhashani fair, was organised in Tangail's Santosh, with thousands of visitors, from children to the elderly, attending.

'Crossfire would have been an act of mercy'

FROM PAGE 12

said Bulbul.

Instead, he felt cold metal on his right knee and the sound of a trigger being pulled -- 11 years on, the man still remembers which of his knees was capped at first.

"I heard the sound of a shot being fired, and felt my leg jumping up and then crashing on the ground. Then the same thing happened with my other leg. Then I felt a wetness -- blood -- creeping up my back all the way to my head," recalled Bulbul.

Police then admitted Bulbul to a government hospital in Sathkhira. "The doctors just wrapped up my legs with gauze and dumped me on the floor of a ward. I implored them to treat me, I told them I was in pain, but it was to no avail."

It was only after his family found him -- a full day after he was shot -- that he was shifted to Khulna Medical College Hospital, and he received the first dressing of his wounds.

"My family had to bribe a doctor to get me discharged from Sathkhira. I received my first treatment on the night of the second day after getting shot."

"When doctors came to see me, they found that my legs were literally bending up from the knee to the front, totally opposite to how legs are supposed to bend towards the back. A huge portion of my legs just did not have any bones."

The first dressing was excruciating, said Bulbul. "Not even the pain of being beaten up for over two hours compares to the pain of being cut into and cleaned."

Bulbul was referred to the National Institute of Traumatology and Orthopaedic Rehabilitation in Dhaka

Born in 1880 at Dhangara village in Sirajganj, Bhashani dedicated his entire life to establishing the rights of the oppressed and downtrodden.

He was immensely influential throughout his political career and played a key role in winning many general and local government elections since 1946.

He fought against the imperialism and oppression of Pakistani rulers and led the historic Farakka Long March in 1976.

Bhashani was the founder of the Pakistan Awami Muslim League in 1949. He also formed a progressive political organisation called the

National Awami Party in 1957, and played a significant role in the 1969 movement against Ayub Khan's autocratic rule.

The brave and devoted leader worked relentlessly and spent almost his entire life for the oppressed masses, which earned him the title "Mazum Jana Neta", meaning the leader of the oppressed.

His belief in the secular struggle for Bangladesh was unequivocal.

During the 1971 Liberation War, he worked as the chairman of the All Party Action Committee under the Bangladesh government in exile in India.

a criminal.

Limon -- whose case has received a lot of media attention -- had repeatedly tried to receive justice and been repeatedly denied.

"The first investigation by Rajapur Police Station said they could not find who shot me. The second investigation by the Rab found me to be a criminal. The third probe report by the home ministry was never published. The fourth by the Police Bureau of Investigation said that I am not a criminal but said that Rab never shot me. Currently, the Criminal Investigation Department is conducting a fifth probe," said Limon.

Human rights activist Moshfiqur Rahman Johan shared photographs of kneecapping victims and illustrated his experiences.

At the event, Sapran researcher Nusrat Jahan Nisu said, "What were once scattered, isolated incidents became a systemic and widespread method of repression post 2014."

"When a government does not have legitimacy, then instilling fear is a method of controlling the population. Maiming is far more effective than killing dissidents," said Prof Mohammad Mahbubur Rahman of Dhaka University's law department.

He added that since independence, political leaders have cultivated hatred instead of collective nation-building.

Faruk Wasif, director general of Press Institute of Bangladesh, explained how the Awami League deepened divisions within society through politics of vengeance and with the help of opportunistic intellectuals and servile media, dehumanised political opponents -- creating conditions in which grave human rights violations like kneecapping became possible.

Shoot anyone attempting arson

FROM PAGE 1

Meanwhile, leaders and activists of Jatiya Chhatra Shakti at Dhaka University and Jahangirnagar University brought out separate torch processions last night, demanding the maximum punishment for Hasina.

SECURITY DEPLOYMENT

Security presence has been increased at major intersections, gateways to the city, important establishments, and other key point installations.

Border Guard Bangladesh teams have been stationed in Dhaka, Gopalganj, Faridpur, and Madaripur to assist in maintaining order.

Talebur Rahman, deputy commissioner of DMP's media wing, told The Daily Star that sufficient forces are deployed across Dhaka to deter sabotage and ensure public safety.

Both uniformed and plainclothes personnel from the police, Rab, BGB, and the army are currently on the ground. All agencies have been instructed to focus on advanced intelligence.

Home Adviser Lt Gen (retd) Jahangir Alam Chowdhury, at a programme in Barishal yesterday, said all state forces were on high alert ahead of the verdict.

On the overall situation, he said, "I won't say law and order is very good or very bad. What we have now is satisfactory ... The minor unrest seen in a few places over the last few days will be brought under control with everyone's cooperation."

Contacted, Bangladesh Police spokesperson AHM Sahadat Hossain said the highest level of security alert has been activated nationwide.

"Additional personnel have been assigned to strategic locations,

NEWS

IUB's business conference ends



CITY DESK

The two-day International Conference on Economics, Business and Technology Management 2025, organised by the School of Business and Entrepreneurship of Independent University, Bangladesh, concluded on November 15 with an award and closing ceremony at The Westin Dhaka, said a press release.

Didar A Husain, chairman of IUB's Board of Trustees; VC Prof M Tamim; Pro-VC Prof Daniel W Lund; Acting Dean of SBE Prof Raisul Awal Mahmud; Conference General Chair Prof Md Mamun Habib; and AKM Shahinawaj, managing director (current charge), Dhaka Bank PLC, spoke at the closing ceremony.

IUB Trustee Wajid Ali Khan Panni, Trustee Dr Husne Ara Ali, and Dhaka University VC Prof Niaz Ahmed Khan were also present.



Swapna Kumar Baidya dries beti pata (leaves) under the sun to prepare them for mat-making. Collected from wetland areas, beti pata mats remain in demand despite competition from synthetic alternatives. Artisans like Swapna make about two mats a day, selling each wholesale for Tk 450 to Tk 800. The photo was taken at Akmaner Mor in Boyra of Khulna yesterday.

PHOTO: HABIBUR RAHMAN

Political parties still failing women

FROM PAGE 3
manager at Naripokkho, said biological differences must not be used to justify limiting women's rights. "Any policy that pushes women backwards, whether through religious arguments or political decisions, must be resisted," she said.

Organisers said the conference reviewed barriers women still face in politics

and public life. With national elections ahead, participants said women's rights must move from rhetoric to law, from manifestos to parliament, and from promises to reality.

Presenting the conference recommendations, Naripokkho member Amita Dey said these included helping women build stronger voices in decision-making spaces, involving

more young women and organising more actively where needed.

The recommendations also called for mobilising networks and resources, promoting unity at personal, social and state levels and keeping links between generations.

Other Naripokkho representatives, including Rashida Hossain and Samia Akhter, also spoke.

Parties flag concerns

FROM PAGE 3
attended the dialogue, though the Amin-led faction later had to leave as they did not have the hard copy of the EC's invitation.

Gonoform President Subrata Chowdhury said, "A yes/no vote under the referendum would be impractical and could turn into a farce if the party, government, and EC did not act responsibly."

Bangladesh Jatiya Party Secretary General Zafar Ahmed Joy thanked the EC for allowing voting by individual party symbols despite alliances, urging it not to bow to pressure.

EC Abul Fazal Md Sanaullah said the commission would not bow to any pressure and warned that muscle power, bias, and false information would face strict action. He urged parties to carefully appoint polling agents.

Islamic Front Bangladesh Chairman Syed Bahadur Shah Mojaddedi called for a level playing field and proposed holding the elections in four phases rather than nationwide on a single day.

The second session, held from 2:00pm to 4:00pm, was joined by representatives of Bangladesh Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal, Bangladesh National Awami Party (Bangladesh NAP), Krishak Shramik Janata League, Bangladesh Khalfat Majlis, and Islami Andolan Bangladesh.

Krishak Shramik Janata League President Bangabir Abdul Kader Siddiqui termed holding the referendum and national election on the same day "illogical", adding that voters remain confused about the four referendum questions and that low turnout could

undermine the national polls.

Islami Andolan Bangladesh Senior President Member Syed Mosaddeq Billah Al Madani also demanded a separate date for the referendum.

Bangladesh JASOD General Secretary Nazmul Haque Prodhan called for lowering the security deposit required for contesting the polls.

Referring to the Awami League, he said that while a part of one party has fled and will not contest, the EC must ensure a congenial environment for those wishing to participate.

Khelaft Majlis Secretary General Jalal Uddin Ahmad stressed the need for the commission's neutrality and called for army deployment around polling centres.

Referring to the Awami League, he said that while a part of one party has fled and will not contest, the EC must ensure a congenial environment for those wishing to participate.

Other notable attendees included Kaiser A Chowdhury, chairman of the Management Board of Nagad; Abu Saleh Akon, president of DRU; and Mynul Hasan Sohel, general secretary of DRU.

From the nominations submitted across 24

Three Star journos win best

FROM PAGE 3
Prospects Print" category for his seven-part series on Dhaka's canals, titled "Dhaka drowns every time it rains when's why."

The awards and prize

cheques were handed over by Finance Adviser Dr Salehuddin Ahmed, who attended the ceremony as chief guest at the International Mother Language Institute Auditorium yesterday.

Other notable attendees included Kaiser A Chowdhury, chairman of the Management Board of Nagad; Abu Saleh Akon, president of DRU; and Mynul Hasan Sohel, general secretary of DRU.

From the nominations submitted across 24

Jasim Uddin (Dhaka Post), Ehsanul Haque Jasim (The Daily Sun), Shamsul Haque Mohammad Miraj (Kaler Kantha), Shah Md Rashedur Rahman (DBC News), Abu Jahed Md Salim (Maarsanga TV), Alamgir Hossain (Jamuna TV), Rajib Ghosh (DBC News), Emdadul Haque (Channel 24), Yousuf Ali (DBC News), Sushanta K Sinha (Ekattor TV), Shahnaz Sharmin (Ekattor TV), Mahde Azad Masum (Boishakhi TV), Mousumi Islam (The Daily Sun), and Hasan Arif (Rupali Bangladesh).

The 10-member jury board for the award was headed by Shamsul Huq Zahid, editor of the English daily The Financial Express.

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বাংলাদেশ বিদ্যুৎ উন্নয়ন বোর্ড

Bangladesh Power Development Board

Memo No. 27.11.1578.746.03.079.02.25-663 Date: 16/11/2025

Invitation for e-Tender Notice (OTM)

e-Tender (OTM) are invited in the National e-GP System Portal (<https://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) for the Procurement of following works:

| Sl. No. | Tender ID | Name of works | Tender closing & tender opening date and time |
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| 1 | 1162234 | Shifting of 33/11/0.4 kV Distribution Line, 11/0.4 kV Sub-Station from Roads solder to safe distance at important market area of Kumira Guptachora-Steamerghat (Sandwip) District Highway (Z-1025) under S&D Division-Sandwip, PDB, Ctg. | 04-Dec-2025 15:00 |

These are online tenders, where only e-Tenders will be accepted in the National e-GP System Portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted.

To submit e-Tender, registration required in the National e-GP System Portal (<https://www.eprocure.gov.bd>).

The fees for downloading the e-Tender documents from the National e-GP System Portal have to be deposited online through any registered bank.

Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP System Portal and from e-GP help desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd). Contract Number (01762625528-31).

Shefath Islam, Advocate, Supreme Court of Bangladesh, Barrister-At-Law, Paltan Tower, 2nd floor, Suit No. 201(A), 87- Purana Paltan Lane, Police Station - Paltan, Dhaka-1000, Phone 01707352178, 01711528150.

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CHANDECAN AND CODOVASCAM

Two forgotten kingdoms of Bengal

RILA MUKHERJEE

Maps are regarded as affirmative visual documents, permanently fixing places, distances, and itineraries in our minds. Yet we often forget that early modern maps were subjective texts, only approximating places. Moreover, European mapmakers frequently chose to assign names to locations that bore little relation to their actual identities or physical positions. This essay examines two such cases in Bengal: the kingdoms of Chandecan and Codovascam, located in what were once Samatata and Harikela.

I
Pratapaditya Roy (b. 1561 – d. 1611-12) envisioned a maritime polity that held together the port-based kingdom known as the Regno de Chandecan. Initially, Pratapaditya ruled the landlocked territory of Jessor, establishing his capital at Dhumghat — a strategic point at the confluence of the Jamuna (Brahmaputra) and Ichhamati rivers. The capital was later shifted south to Ishwaripur, also known as Jashoreshwaripur, on the Ichhamati in Khulna, with direct access to the Bay of Bengal. This site became the capital of the chiefdom from 1590 to 1612, featuring extensive shipyards and dockyards at Jahaighata or Khanpur, and also at Dadkhah and Chakvasi.

This was a maritime chiefdom, benefitting from the eastward shift of rivers that endowed the southeastern delta with new military outposts and strategic locations for trade. Pratapaditya built the Jashoreshwari Kali Temple at Ishwaripur, perhaps as a commemorative act — though of what we do not know — and the Jashoreshwari Kali appears to have become the polity's tutelary deity. Despite this, Chandecan remained an open, pluralistic kingdom. The Portuguese built Bengal's first Catholic church in Ishwaripur in 1599-1600 with funds provided by Pratapaditya.

Chandecan's prominence in the early seventeenth century is attested to by contemporary cartography. Bertius' Map of Bengal (1600) marks the delta as Isola do Chandocam, reflecting the chiefdom's maritime character. However, in Dudley's hydrographic map of the Bengal coast, dated 1646, the island transforms into the Regno di Chandican.

This transition from island to kingdom indicates Chandecan's changing political fortunes. The territory originally ruled by Pratapaditya was too small to constitute a kingdom. His family held a small chiefdom; it would be anachronistic to describe it as a zamindari, as the term implies a British-



The red arrow points to the Regno de Chandecan — the Kingdom of Chandecan — on the 1618 map *Tabularum Geographicarum Contractarum* by Petrus Bertius, Amsterdam.

time, the ports of Sripur (south of Dhaka) and Sandwip (opposite Chittagong). The kingdom stretched from Jessor and Khulna in the north to the Sundarbans and the Bay of Bengal in the south, Barisal in the east, and the Ganga in the west — encompassing most of the present-day districts of Jessor, Khulna, and Barisal. Its governance combined direct control (over Sagar and Bakla) and indirect authority (Pratapaditya claimed revenues from Sripur in 1608 and Sandwip in 1609).

What lay behind the remarkable expansion of this chiefdom? Through a system of strategic alliances and warfare amid a period of rapid political flux, Pratapaditya succeeded in carving out a short-lived but dynamic maritime kingdom. He adopted, consciously or otherwise, the Portuguese model of controlling strategic posts along the Indian Ocean. The economic dislocation caused by

a legacy Pratapaditya inherited through his daughter's marriage to Paramananda's grandson. With Bakla secured, Pratapaditya embarked on a campaign of coastal expansion, the first obstacle to which were the Portuguese themselves.

Pratapaditya dealt with the issue of Portuguese expansion through a system of shifting alliances. Around 1600, while holding court at Bakla, he granted the Jesuit Father Fonseca permission to erect churches and carry out conversions. At the same time, Pratapaditya sought to wrest control of Sandwip from the Portuguese in alliance with Arakan by beheading Carvalho, its unofficial ruler, in 1602. Yet by 1609, he supported the Portuguese Gonçalves at Sandwip against both the Mughals and Sripur, under whose jurisdiction Sandwip fell. The Afghan adventurer Fateh Khan, in

subahdar Islam Khan Chishti with a lavish gift to secure imperial favour, before personally submitting to him in 1609. Pratapaditya agreed to surrender twenty thousand infantry, five hundred war boats, and a thousand maunds (approximately 41 tons) of gunpowder — an exceedingly expensive commodity at the time. He also pledged military support and personal service in the Mughal campaign against Musa.

This, however, was a promise Pratapaditya did not keep. To punish him for his disloyalty, a Mughal expedition under Ghiyas Khan's command advanced to Salka, near the confluence of the Jamuna and Ichhamati, in 1611. Pratapaditya assembled a strong army and fleet, and built a supposedly impregnable fort, placing it under the command of experienced officers, including feringis (Portuguese), Afghans, and Pathans. The Mughals, however, cut off the Jessor fleet, forcing the fort's evacuation. Pratapaditya prepared for another confrontation from a new base near the junction of the Kagharghat canal and the Jamuna. He built another fort at a strategic location and concentrated all his remaining forces there. The Mughals launched their assault in January 1612, first attacking the Jessor fleet and compelling it to take shelter beneath the fort. After defeating the fleet, they assaulted the fort itself, forcing Pratapaditya to retreat once again.

This marked the end for Pratapaditya. At Kagharghat, he surrendered to Ghiyas Khan, who personally escorted him to Islam Khan in Dhaka. Pratapaditya was shackled and imprisoned in Dhaka. His kingdom was annexed in 1612.

II
By contrast, far less is known about Codovascam. It was an upstream polity based around the riverine port of Chakoria, located in the remote eastern region of Harikela — a borderland adjacent to Chittagong.

To understand Codovascam's location, one must examine both Chittagong city and its wider district. Chittagong underwent a form of "cartographic surgery" when the United States' post-World War II Area Studies programme divided the region, imposing national and administrative boundaries that bore little relation to Chittagong's once expansive hinterland. The city itself was historically an autonomous border-town and port on a fluid and dynamic water frontier. Its site is distinctive — a complex land-river-sea ecosystem with unstable coastal islands (chars) separated from the mainland by shallow channels and mangroves. To the south, where Arakan and Bengal overlapped, rises the Arakan Yoma barrier. To the northwest, vast waterbodies (haor in the local dialect, derived from the Sanskrit sagar or sagaranupa) extend the Meghna-Brahmaputra waterway into what may be called an "Eastern Sea".

Chittagong district includes the area lying east of the Karnaphuli, whose lower reaches are enclosed by the Kutubdia and Maheshkhali



The red arrow indicates the Estado do Codovascam — the Kingdom of Codovascam — on the 1777 map *Da Ásia de João de Barros / Década Quarta*, edited by Diogo do Couto, Lisbon.

era classification of property ownership in eighteenth-century Bengal.

So, what — or who — was Chandecan? The term Chandecan was a Portuguese corruption of "Chand Khan". Daud Khan Karrani, the last independent Sultan of Bengal, had granted Pratapaditya's father, Srihari (or Sridhar) — an influential officer in his service — the title of "Vikramaditya" and the lands of one Chand Khan, who had died intestate. Following Daud Khan's fall in 1576, Srihari took advantage of the turmoil caused by the Mughal conquest of western Bengal to declare independence, assume the title of "Maharaja", and lay the foundations of a chiefdom spanning West Bengal and southeastern Bangladesh.

Between 1598 and 1609, the kingdom of Chandecan — originally encompassing the deltaic outlet of Bakla (Chandradwip, the Chandra port of ninth-tenth-century Bengal, later Bakargunj in Barisal) — extended its control over the port of Sagar (south of Kolkata) and the island of Dakhin Shabazpur (in the southeastern delta), as well as, for a

the shifting alignment of diverse overland and maritime networks — Sultani, Afghan, Mughal, Arab, Persian, Tripuri, Arakanese, and Portuguese — in fact enabled his royal ambitions.

Pratapaditya was the father-in-law of Bakla's ruler, Ramchandra, son of Kandarpa Ray, a baro bhuinya who reigned from 1584 to 1598. Ramchandra married Pratapaditya's daughter Bindumati and established his capital at Husainpur. Bakla, a profitable port, was thus left free for Pratapaditya to occupy after 1598. Earlier, on April 30, 1559, a treaty had been signed at Goa between Paramananda Rai, then ruler of Bakla, and the Portuguese Viceroy Constantino de Braganza, by which Bakla was opened to Portuguese shipping under fixed and low customs duties. In return, Bakla received a licence for four ships to trade with Goa, Hormuz, and Melaka. This Hormuz-Goa-Melaka route, extended by stops at Bakla, Sripur, and Sandwip, established a new Portuguese network in southeastern Bengal

Portuguese pay and notorious for his shifting loyalties between the Mughals and Arakan, then controlled Sandwip. Gonçalves, trading through Pratapaditya's ports, defeated Fateh Khan's forces in alliance with Pratapaditya. In return, Pratapaditya claimed half of Sandwip's revenues, but Gonçalves turned against him and seized the island of Dakhin Shabazpur, which lay within Pratapaditya's domains.

Early seventeenth century delta politics must be viewed against the backdrop of these rapid changes. After Sripur's Kedar Rai died, Pratapaditya attempted to take over Sripur, but it fell under the control of Isa Khan's son, Musa Khan, ruler of Sonargaon. Musa governed Dhaka, Sonargaon, almost half of Tripura, Mymensingh, Rangpur, and parts of Bogura and Pabna. As Chandecan expanded, its borders approached Musa's territories, explaining Pratapaditya's reluctance to aid the Mughals against him.

Among the delta chiefs, Pratapaditya was the first to send his envoy to the Mughal

channels extending inland, in addition to the better-known Karnaphuli passage prioritised in historical narratives. This borderland area, corresponding to present-day Cox's Bazar district, was represented on maps as a polity called Codovascam (image 2). The Regno de Codovascam likely corresponded to the territory of Khuda Baksh Khan, a quasi-autonomous Husainid chief who became a Mughal feudatory of southern Chittagong after the region's re-capture from Arakan. Its centre was Chakoria — or Cukkara — a key salt-trading port on the Matamuhuri River, which had been plundered by Arakan King Min Khayi in 1439, consolidating Arakanese control until that time.

Why was Codovascam significant? Like its political environment, this borderland was physically unstable yet potentially lucrative. As Maheshkhali Island rose from the sea, it became Codovascam's maritime gateway, while Chakoria grew into a port of regional prominence. The island originated from a cyclone and tidal bore in 1559, which separated it from Chittagong by the Maheshkhali Channel. Cesare Federici (August 1569) and Ralph Fitch (March 1588) both recorded devastating cyclones in the area. Seismic disturbances also shook this part of the coast. The Ottoman navigational treatise *Muhit* (1554) speaks of extensive level changes and refers to navigational hazards among islands that have since vanished.

In 1528, Khuda Baksh imprisoned at Chakoria Martini Alfonso de Melo Jusarte, a shipwrecked Portuguese captain whose mission appears to have been to open up the Patani-Bengal trade. The event, though seemingly insignificant in the larger scheme of things, became sensational in Europe because de Melo Jusarte was an important officer stationed at Portuguese Melaka, who had led armadas and missions against Pahang and Patani in Southeast Asia.

Mapmakers Blaeu (1606, 1638), Magni Mogolis Imperium, 1659; Barros (1615); Sanson (1648); Jansson (1650 and 1659); de Wit (1662); Valentyn (1724); and Bellin (1747) depicted Codovascam as a fortified city with a maritime outlet. Jansson's *Sinus Gangeticus Vulgo Golfo de Bengala, Nova Descriptio* (Atlas Atlantis Majoris, 1650) represented it as a coastal power between Chittagong and Arakan, enclosed by the Karnaphuli and Cosmin rivers (the latter being, in fact, the Meghna, since Jansson shows Sonargaon on its banks; moreover, the Cosmin lay further east), and fortified at Dianga, Santatoly, Chorcordia (Choria, Chakoria, Cukkara, Sora, Sunder, Tanascam, and Aciapoda).

However, map depictions changed as the polity's power waned. Van der Aa (1708) shows a diminutive Codovascam lying between the Martaban and Cosmin rivers. Valentyn and Bellin depicted a single fortified town — Codovascam — following the prevailing convention of naming a capital after the region and ruler. Yet Bellin shifted Codovascam's territorial extent westward from Blaeu's and Jansson's locations, bringing it closer to southeast Bengal, between the 'Riviere de Boom' (Bamni, Meghna's eastern branch) and the 'Riviere de Chatighan' (Karnaphuli). It now had Tripura to the north and Bhulua to the south. Evidently, mapmakers struggled to represent Codovascam accurately as it oscillated between contending powers, though it seems to have remained networked with Chittagong. 'Choria' was shown as part of Arakan (Bertius, 1602; Blaeu, 1606; Ramusio-Gastaldi Terza Ostro Tavola, 1603/13; Portugese Taboas Geraes de toda a navegacao, divididas e emendadas por Dom Jeronimo de Attayede etc., 1630; Jansson, 1650; Van der Aa, 1708).

III
I began by saying that maps are not neutral texts. But I had two other points to make. Chandecan's case illustrated how polities with strategic ports contributed to regional expansion, yet its curious history also demonstrated the short-lived and fragile nature of such minor kingdoms. By contrast, Codovascam revealed a distant past and its transformations within a specific borderland context. Its micro-history exposed differential temporalities — of central importance in exploring the economic, cultural, and social intersections where systems meet or collide.

Since particular sites of micro-historical inquiry act as fragments through which universal processes can be discerned — in this instance, Portuguese expansion in the upper Bay — Codovascam's case offers a means to engage with the chaos, disorder, ruptures, and discontinuities that micro-frames introduce, thereby allowing us to connect the particular with the universal.

Rila Mukherjee is a historian and author of *India and the Indian Ocean World* (Springer, 2022).



Chief Adviser Professor Muhammad Yunus stands alongside captains of the 11 teams as well as other dignitaries at the state guest house Jamuna on Sunday following the unveiling of the trophy for the 2nd Women's Kabaddi World Cup, which gets underway in Dhaka today.

PHOTO: CHIEF ADVISER'S OFFICE

WOMEN'S KABADDI WORLD CUP STARTS TODAY

The second edition of the Women's Kabaddi World Cup will kick off in Dhaka today and will conclude on November 24.

Four matches will take place on the opening day, with Bangladesh and Uganda facing off in the opening match, following the inauguration ceremony at the Shaheed Suhrawardi Indoor Stadium in Mirpur at 3:00 pm.

11 teams are participating in this edition, down from 16 from the first edition held in Patna, India in 2012.

India won the first edition while Iran emerged runners-up.

Bangladesh had finished fifth in that edition, held in Patna, India.

Group A: Bangladesh, India, Germany, Thailand, Uganda
Group B: Iran, Chinese Taipei, Kenya, Nepal, Poland, Zanzibar



South Africa's last Test win in India before this was in 2010 in Nagpur -- by an innings and six runs. Between that win and the Kolkata victory, they played eight Tests in India, losing 7 and drawing 1.

India failed to chase 124 at Eden Gardens -- their second-lowest failed chase in a defeat after failing to chase 120 against West Indies in Bridgetown in 1997.

124 is also South Africa's second-lowest successful defence in Tests; the lowest is 117 against Australia in Sydney in 1994.

Very exciting, you want to be a part of those types of games and obviously be on the right side of the result. I think we tried to hold our ground as much as we could. We knew it was going to be tough with the bat, it was tough for us, but we needed to exploit what was there.

South Africa skipper Temba Bavuma

There was no demon in this wicket. It was not an unplayable one. This was not a typical turning track. It was more of a test of your technique and mental toughness... Those who defended well scored runs.

India coach Gautam Gambhir

BAVUMA SCRIPTS Eden glory to make it 10 in 11

AGENCIES

Tumba Bavuma walked out onto the Eden Gardens turf in Kolkata on the third morning on Sunday knowing South Africa's fate rested squarely on his shoulders. He did what a captain does -- leading from the front to script a sensational win for his country, alongside Simon Harmer who spearheaded the Proteas' lion-hearted bowling effort with four for 21.

Ten wins in eleven Tests as captain -- his only non-victory a draw -- had elevated Bavuma alongside Mike Brearley for the most wins before a first defeat. Yet none of those triumphs had demanded more grit than the battle unfolding on this treacherous Kolkata surface.

South Africa had conceded a first-innings deficit of 30.

Resuming at 93 for seven, they clung to the contest by a thread. The pitch had turned into a minefield overnight, its inconsistent bounce swallowing shot-makers whole.

Bavuma began the day on 29 and remained calm in the chaos, unwilling to surrender. Each ball he faced was a skirmish; each run, a rebellion. Corbin Bosch offered brave company with a defiant 25, but when Jasprit Bumrah speared one through his off stump, the tail unraveled swiftly. Still Bavuma stood firm, batting 136 balls for an unbeaten 55, the only fifty of the match. He walked

off stranded, but unbowed.

India required just 124. Even without their injured captain Shubman Gill, they were expected to march home. But Bavuma gathered his huddle, voice low, conviction unshaken -- and his bowlers responded like lions.

Marco Jansen ripped out both openers before lunch, leaving India effectively 10 for three. The noise from the packed home crowd dimmed into unease.

Then Harmer took charge, his off-spin biting, bouncing, deceiving. He removed Dhruv Jurel, ending the young wicketkeeper's dream start of seven wins in seven Tests. He pulled off a stunning caught-and-bowled to dismiss Rishabh Pant, and dismantled India's middle order with the ruthlessness of a man who sensed history within reach.

Keshav Maharaj struck twice in two balls. Washington Sundar's resistance fell to Aiden Markram. Axar Patel's brief fireworks fizzled.

And as India collapsed for 93, losing by 30 runs, the South Africans erupted.

Harmer finished with match figures of eight wickets, a fully deserving Player of the Match. But this victory, this breathtaking heist within three days, belonged above all to Bavuma: the captain who refused to yield, who carved 55 runs of pure defiance to give his bowlers something to fight for.

The second and final Test starts Saturday in Guwahati.

'Need to be ready for any challenge'

SPORTS REPORTER

India goalkeeper Gurpreet Singh Sandhu believes they are up for a fiercely competitive match against Bangladesh in Dhaka on November 18, the penultimate game of their AFC Asian Cup Qualifiers campaign with both sides already out of contention.

The India team arrived on Saturday evening and were wrapped under heavy security, away from the media. Speaking to the All India Football Federation's media team, Sandhu said they will need to be mentally and physically prepared for the Bangladesh challenge.

"It's always a big game for them and for the people of Bangladesh because it's against India," said Sandhu. "We need to be prepared mentally and physically because it's always a tough game. It might not be the nicest game to watch. It might be scrappy, and we as a team need to be ready for any challenge. We need to be tough out there when we face them."

"The experience over here has always been a learning one. You know it's not an easy place to come because it's very competitive. Being our neighbours, the team here wants to do well against us and give us a tough time," the 32-year-old goalkeeper said.

Meanwhile, defender Sandesh Jhingan, who captained India when these two sides last met in March's reverse fixture in Shillong which ended in a goalless draw, said, "We were briefed (about the security situation) before coming here. ... We, as athletes, are only focused on putting our best foot forward while playing. Sport is something that unites people, and I hope this game can also unite and bring a good feeling."



SHORT CORNER

Dhaka rally behind Shibli ton

Dhaka Division batter Ashikur Rahman Shibli struck a composed century to steer his side to 252-4 on Day 2 of the fourth round of the National Cricket League 2025-26, reducing the deficit against Rajshahi Division to 46 runs at the Shaheed Kamruzzaman Stadium on Sunday.

We conceded too many goals: Aikman

After suffering a 10-3 defeat in the third and final match in the qualifiers play-off series against Pakistan, Bangladesh hockey team's Dutch coach Siegfried Aikman said the number of goals conceded had simply been too much for his side, having suffered 8-2 and 8-0 losses in the first two matches.

U-17s eye Asian Cup finals after 19 years

Bangladesh have set their sights on reaching the finals of the 2026 AFC U-17 Asian Cup as the qualifying rounds kick off across seven venues on November 22, with the boys in red and green placed in a challenging Group A with China, Bahrain, Brunei, Sri Lanka and Timor-Leste. Bangladesh have failed to reach the final round in the last nine editions since their breakthrough qualification in 2006.

**Read full stories on The Daily Star website.

Doggett set to become Australia's third indigenous Test cricketer

AGENCIES

Seven years after first being named in an Australian squad, Brendan Doggett is poised to achieve a lifelong dream, becoming the country's 472nd Test cricketer after Josh Hazlewood was ruled out of the Ashes opener at Optus Stadium in Perth on Friday.

The 31-year-old will join a fast-bowling attack featuring Mitchell Starc and Scott Boland, mirroring the late-blooming path of his fellow Indigenous teammate. In almost 150 years of Australian Test cricket, only two Indigenous men -- Boland and Jason Gillespie -- have represented the nation, with Doggett set to become the third.



Doggett's journey has been unconventional. After first receiving a national call-up in 2018, injuries slowed his progress. A move to South Australia in 2021, however, allowed him to lead the attack and cement his place in Australian squads, though he was often behind Starc, Hazlewood, and captain Pat Cummins.

With both Hazlewood and Cummins unavailable for the Ashes start, Doggett finally gets his opportunity.

"His path to a potential Baggy Green is not a common one in the modern game," Gillespie, who coached Doggett at South Australia, told ABC Radio. "He's one of the quicker bowlers in Australia, got a good motor, he's a greyhound and as fit as a fiddle. England will sniff an opportunity, but I'm confident the Australian seam attack is good enough to get the job done."

Doggett will join a rare group of Australians to make their Test debut without prior white-ball international experience, cementing his reputation as a determined, late-blooming talent.

Estevao's electric emergence 'guarantees Brazil's future'

STAR SPORTS DESK

For Brazil, a 2-0 win over Senegal on Saturday night offered something far greater than a routine result: a glimpse of the future. And that future, judging by the way Estevao lit up north London, looks unmistakably bright. The 18-year-old Chelsea winger was the standout performer in a match defined by flashes of attacking fluidity and Carlo Ancelotti's ongoing experimentation. Playing on the right of a dynamic front four with Vinicius Jr, Rodrygo and Matheus Cunha, he needed only one moment to tilt the evening his way, operating with the confidence of someone who has been doing it for seasons.

Just before the half-hour mark, a Casemiro pass ricocheted kindly into his stride, and Estevao accelerated onto the ball before curling a left-footed finish inside the far post. Casemiro's header soon made it 2-0, but the evening belonged to the teenager after his sixth strike in last five starts.

Goal aside, what impressed most was his appetite to press, his measured combination play, his ability to glide past defenders without forcing the spectacle. "With Estevao, Brazil has a guaranteed future,"

Ancelotti said. "The amount of talent he has is incredible... he's got a lot of magic and he works very hard."

His rise has felt rapid, but in truth it has long been signposted. Born in Franca, Sao Paulo, Estevao joined Cruzeiro's academy in 2017 and became Nike's youngest Brazilian signee at just 10. His move to Palmeiras in 2021 further accelerated his ascent.

Palmeiras coach Abel Ferreira has long been effusive, calling him "the best talent to emerge from Brazil since Neymar." He soon earned him the nickname "Messinho".

Chelsea had acted decisively in late 2024 -- as they often do -- securing a deal worth over 50 million pounds. Estevao arrived at Stamford Bridge this July after Palmeiras completed their campaign in the FIFA Club World Cup, where Chelsea were crowned champions. Ancelotti believes he is built for both stages.

"He doesn't need many minutes to show his quality," the Italian noted. "Brazil are lucky to have him -- Chelsea as well."

More than two decades have passed since the Selecao last lifted the World Cup. Thus, for the five-time world champions, the implications stretch far beyond a promising cameo in London.

At the Emirates Stadium, Brazil fans may have caught their first real glimpse of someone who is not merely the next Neymar, nor a Messi imitation, but a player whose emergence makes the idea of restoring a dynasty feel possible again.





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49th death anniversary of Bhashani today
Weeklong fair, events planned in Tangail

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Tangail

The 49th death anniversary of Maulana Abdul Hamid Khan Bhashani, a legendary political leader in the sub-continent, will be observed today.

He passed away on this day in 1976, and was buried at Santosh in Tangail.

To mark the day, the authorities of Mawlawi Bhashani Science and Technology University (MBSTU) in Tangail, along with various socio-political organisations, have chalked out elaborate events.

They will place wreaths at his grave at Tangail's Santosh in the morning.

Other programmes include doa and milad mahfils, food distribution, and discussions on the life and works of the leader.



SEE PAGE 8 COL 4



Vehicles struggle to pass Gulistan area as hawkers occupy a large portion of the street, creating severe congestion. Pedestrians also face difficulty as the pavement is occupied too. The photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

LIBYA'S COAST Four Bangladeshi migrants dead as 2 boats capsize

REUTERS

At least four Bangladeshi nationals died after two boats carrying 95 irregular migrants capsized off the Libyan coastal city of Al Khums on Thursday, the Libyan Red Crescent said on Saturday.

The first boat was carrying 26 migrants from Bangladesh, four of whom died, the Red Crescent said in a statement on its verified Facebook page.

The second boat carried 69 migrants, including two Egyptians and dozens of Sudanese, the Red Crescent added without specifying their fate.

Khums is a coastal city, some 118 km east of the capital, Tripoli. On Wednesday, the International Organization for Migration said that at least 42 migrants went missing and presumed dead after a rubber boat sank near the Al Buri oilfield, an offshore facility north-northwest of the Libyan coast.

Libya has become a transit route for migrants fleeing conflict and poverty to Europe across the Mediterranean since the fall in 2011 of dictator Muammar Gaddafi during a Nato-backed uprising.

Pictures released by the Khums Red Crescent showed a line of bodies in black plastic bags laid out on the floor, while the volunteers are seen providing first aid to the survivors. Other pictures show the rescued migrants wrapped in thermal blankets sitting on the floor.

The statement added that Coast Guards and Khums Port Security Agency participated in the rescue operation. Adding that the bodies were handed over to the relevant authorities based on instructions by the city's public prosecution.

In mid October, a group of 61 bodies of migrants were recovered on the coast west of the capital Tripoli. In September, IOM said at least 50 people had died after a vessel carrying 75 Sudanese refugees caught fire off Libya's coast.

AGENCIES

Thousands protested across Mexico on Saturday under the banner of "Generation Z," denouncing rising violence after the public killing of an anti-crime mayor earlier this month.

In Mexico City, a small group of hooded protesters tore down fences around the National Palace where President Claudia Sheinbaum lives, prompting a clash with riot police who deployed tear gas, according to Reuters witnesses.

Mexico City's public safety secretary Pablo Vazquez said in a press conference that 100 police officers were injured, including 40 who required hospital treatment. Another 20 civilians were also injured, Vazquez told local media outlet Milenio.

The public safety secretary also said 20 people were arrested and another 20 "referred for administrative offenses."

Other marches took place in various cities across Mexico, including in the western state of Michoacan, where anger has flared over the murder on November 1 of Uruapan Mayor Carlos Manzo, who was shot dead at a public Day of the Dead event.

Some demonstrators in

Death of Michoacán mayor who fought drug trafficking sparks protest

Demonstrators attack National Palace where President Claudia Sheinbaum lives

Sheinbaum's govt questioned the motives behind marches

Mexico City targeted their ire at Sheinbaum's party, chanting, "Out, Morena." Some also called for stronger state efforts to stop crime and violence, shouting, "Carlos did not die, the government killed him."

A group calling itself "Generation Z Mexico" that called for the protests has said in a "manifesto" circulating on social media that it is non-partisan and represents Mexican youth that are fed up with violence, corruption and abuse of power.

Generation Z refers to people born between 1997 and 2012, on the heels of the millennials, and protest groups in other countries across the globe have taken on the label to push for social and political change.

The assassinated mayor's widow, however, distanced her husband's movement from the demonstration on Saturday, reports AFP.

Bernardo Bravo, a leader of lime producers in the same region, had also been shot dead in late October.

Earlier this week, Sheinbaum questioned the motivations for the demonstration and said at her regular morning news conference that the protest was "inorganic" and "paid for."

"It is a movement promoted from abroad against the government," she said.

Demonstrators displayed banners bearing messages such as "We are all Carlos Manzo" alongside the iconic pirate flag from the Japanese manga One Piece, which has become a symbol of youth protest around the world, from Madagascar to the Philippines and Peru.

"You should have protected Carlos Manzo like this!" some protesters shouted at security forces, who responded with fire extinguishers and tear gas.

ISS astronauts take cover for 'cannibal' solar storm

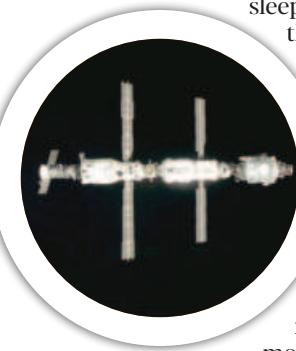
INDEPENDENT.CO.UK

Astronauts aboard the International Space Station (ISS) were forced to alter their routine sleeping positions due to the threat posed by solar particles from an extreme "cannibal" storm, an update from the orbiting outpost reveals.

Out of caution, the three Russian cosmonauts aboard the space station were instructed to spend the night in the ISS laboratory module, according to a recent communication between Nasa mission control and the crew.

"We entered into an energetic solar particle event this morning, and we're going to go in and out of holes of higher than the baseline [radiation] risk," a mission control operator told astronaut Mike Fincke aboard the ISS, according to Space.com.

The British Geological Survey had earlier warned that a series of solar storms released from the Sun this week could feed off another one, creating one of the biggest "cannibal" storms since 2005.



Demonstrators clash with police during a protest against insecurity and corruption outside the National Palace in Mexico City, Mexico on Saturday.

PHOTO: REUTERS

'Crossfire would have been an act of mercy'

Says survivor of kneecapping

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

It would have been better to be killed by law enforcers in a "crossfire" than to be maimed, said a survivor of kneecapping as he recounted his experiences of torture at an event in the capital yesterday.

Samsul Alam Bulbul, who survived after being shot in both knees, had first thought that he was about to be shot to death, and passed off as a "crossfire" victim.

But what followed was years of excruciating pain, medical expenses of over Tk 60 lakh, a lifelong disability, and battling predatory cases.

He was speaking at a panel discussion titled "Kneecapping Democracy: Silencing Dissent by Crippling Bodies in Bangladesh", organised by Sapran (Safeguarding All Lives) at Bishwo Shahitto Kendro.

Bulbul said police arrested him on August 30, 2014, from Kolaroa in Satkhira. "They first put me into an interrogation cell and started beating me indiscriminately on the legs until they were fractured."

He said he was tied to a chair and beaten up for about two and a half hours straight on the legs. At one point, they blindfolded him and threw him into a police van.

"They took me to a place a few minutes later, and I felt myself being dragged out and dumped onto grass. I was sure that they would kill me right then and there,"

SEE PAGE 8 COL 4

5 killed as bus rear-ends truck in Sitakunda

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Chattogram

At least five people were killed and around 12 injured after a bus rear ended a dump truck on the Dhaka-Chattogram Highway and plunged into a roadside ditch in Sitakunda upazila yesterday evening.

The identities of the deceased, all male passengers of the bus, could not be known immediately, said police.

Police and fire service officials said the incident took place at the upazila's Bottola area of the highway at 5:55pm.

Highway Police (Cumilla region) Additional Superintendent of Police Kirtiman Chakma told The Daily Star, "A Chattogram-bound bus of CDM Paribahan hit a dump truck from behind on the highway after the driver lost control over the vehicle. The bus plunged into a roadside ditch, killing four on the spot."

Sitakunda Fire Service Senior Station Officer Belal Hossain said, "Firefighters rushed to the spot and recovered four bodies from the bus. Two were sent to the upazila health complex in critical condition."

Sitakunda Upazila Health Complex's doctor Altaf Hossain told reporters, "On-duty doctors declared one-person death after he was brought to the hospital in critical condition. Two were sent to Chattogram Medical College Hospital (CMCH) for better treatment. Apart from that around 15 were given primary treatment."

In a Facebook video, it was seen that four bodies were kept in body bags on the street after being recovered from the bus wreckage. The front part of the bus was totalled.

Kumira Highway Police Station's Officer-in-Charge (OC) Zakir Rabbani said the bus driver tried to overtake the dump truck but lost control, hitting the truck from behind.

"Legal action will be taken in this regard and the bodies will be handed over to the victims' families after confirming their identities," he added.

3 killed as Israel strikes southern Gaza

AGENCIES

At least three Palestinians were killed in Israeli attacks east of Khan Yunis in southern Gaza yesterday, a source at the Nasser Medical Complex said.

Israeli helicopters also bombed northern areas of Rafah in southern Gaza. Search efforts have resumed in Gaza City's Zeitoun neighbourhood, where teams from the Red Cross and the Qassam Brigades, Hamas's armed wing, were again trying to locate the body of a captive.

Israel on Saturday returned 15 more bodies of Palestinians detained in Gaza, bringing the total number of Palestinian dead received since the October 10 ceasefire to 330, reports Al Jazeera online.

Cold temperatures and heavy rainfall were worsening already dire conditions for displaced Palestinian families across Gaza.

Israel's Defense Minister Israel Katz and Foreign Minister Gideon Saar yesterday reiterated the government's stance that it will not accept a Palestinian state.

"Israel's policy is clear: There

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