



HAWKER'S HOWL the unofficial soundtrack of Dhaka

JANNATUL BUSHRA

If Dhaka ever commissioned an audio documentary of itself, the soundtrack wouldn't bother with birdsong or anything that implies urban maturity. No, it would open with a long, nasal, soul-stabbing cry: "Murgiiiiiiiiiiiiii!"

Yes, a sound so elastic and so shamelessly dramatic that it slinks through alleyways, somersaults around electric poles, and ricochets off your seventh-floor balcony like it's practising for an audition with a metal band that never got past your garage!

They say every city has its own music. New York gets the subway screech, Istanbul gets the call to prayer, Rome gets scooters humming like caffeinated mosquitoes. Dhaka? We get a man screaming "Murgiiiiiiiiiiii!" (just chicken) as if the entire capital is one giant chicken clearance sale.

Walk through any neighbourhood of Dhaka - Dhanmondi, Shantinagar, Mirpur, take your pick, and you'll see them on the streets with baskets, trolleys, or buckets full of who-knows-what. Their voices are so loud and powerful, scientists could probably run the national grid with them. But Dhaka, being Dhaka, prefers its load-shedding. And yes, I'm only half-joking.

There's an art to the hawker's howl. It takes patience and practice!

First comes the warm-up: a small cough, a throat clear, and then a declaration to the universe that

mattresses can, in fact, be fixed. Then the tempo rises, a melodic cry for old bottles, newspapers, and any other object that has ever existed in your home.

And who are the listeners of these soul-piercing cries?

Us, the half awake, T-shirt-wearing Dhakaites who swear we're tired of the noise, but pause our Netflix episode to see if the daaboti (large sharpener) guy is passing our building today. Of course, we complain and write about

sound pollution while eagerly leaning over the balcony to negotiate the price of a quick umbrella fixation. Because we are nothing if not contradictory!

And it's not just umbrellas. There are hawkers who claim to fix literally anything and everything. "Puraton TV, radio, electronic shomogri thik kora hoy!" they shout with the confidence of surgeons announcing walk-in open-heart procedures. But the moment you take your year-old, obese television, the one rotting in the corner like a forgotten family member -- they will examine it with the solemnity of a judge, shake their head, and declare, "Ei ta aar thik hobe na. Bechhe din." (Translation: We fix everything... except

the thing you actually need fixed.)

Then there's the famous murgi guy, strutting down the street with chickens hanging upside down. And watching those poor birds sway with each step can make even the most carnivorous Dhakaites feel a soft, guilty ache. For a fleeting second, you might even consider becoming vegetarian. But then you will remember morog

polau exists.

However, the city planners are forever suspicious of these roaming entrepreneurs. Hawkers are like Dhaka's stray cats, impossible to regulate, permanently resourceful, and appearing exactly where you don't expect them. The authorities often try to "organise" them, a word Dhaka interprets somewhat like "make it worse." So, they remain!

And God forbid your flat is anywhere near a kacha

bazar. Then you're doomed, not metaphorically, but acoustically. From dawn till dusk, your life becomes a live action soundscape of men yelling "Jharuuuuuuu!" with the emotional intensity of someone offering life-saving medicine. They're just selling brooms. Regular, unremarkable, everyday brooms. But the way they scream it, you'd think civilisation itself depended on your purchase.

The closer you live to the bazar, the more chaotic the soundtrack. One guy is dragging a trolley full of ginger like he's hauling treasure; another is advertising coriander leaves as though they come with a free plot of land.

There is constant shouting, constant movement, constant bargaining -- a relentless, unedited documentary of Dhaka life unfolding right beneath your balcony. It is maddening, yes. It may rattle the brain, of course! But it also anchors you. Because only Dhaka can turn such pure cacophony into something resembling comfort.

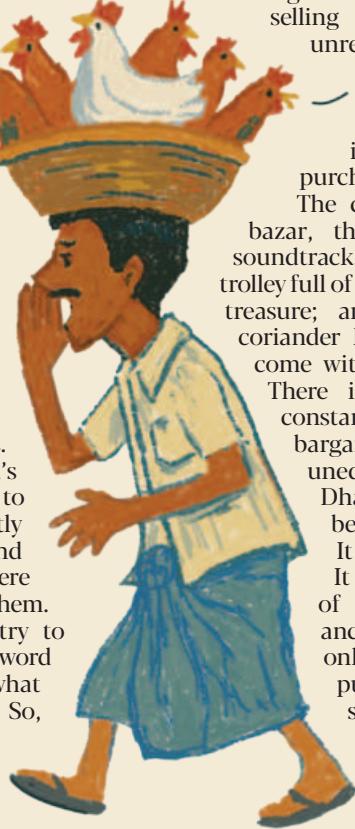


ILLUSTRATION: JAWWAD SAMI NEOGI

Unions applaud EC, govt going full steam ahead

FROM PAGE 1

However, the threshold for union formation could have been calculated as a percentage of workers. For instance, the 20 percent threshold could have been lowered to 10 percent or 12 percent or 15 percent.

So, forming unions with 20 signatories may be challenging for workers in small industrial units, he added.

Towhidur Rahman, president of the Bangladesh Apparels Workers Federation, welcomed allowing an additional eight days for maternity leave. In the amended law, the maternity leave for workers has been increased to 120 days with pay from 112 days.

Bangladesh is not ready to adopt all kinds of standard labour law as the country needs further preparation, said Mohammed Amirul Haque, managing director and chief executive officer of Premier Cement Mills.

The outsiders will be able to instigate the union leaders in factories because of lowering the workers' threshold to 20 workers from 20 percent, he said.

The implementation of the amended labour law will be difficult and is a deterrent for industries, said Anwar Ul-Alam Chowdhury (Parvez), president of Bangladesh Chamber of Industries.

New investors will be worried about investing because of some difficult clauses in the law, he added.

In a joint statement, the leaders of the Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA), the Bangladesh Knitwear Manufacturers and Exporters Association and the Bangladesh Textile Mills Association expressed dissatisfaction as the decisions of the Tripartite Consultative Council (TCC), the highest platform for labour law amendment, were not incorporated.

The definition of a worker, the 20-worker threshold for forming unions and the provision of the provident fund were not agreed upon at the TCC.

"We are rejecting the amended labour law -- our demands are not addressed in the amendment," said BGMEA President Mahmud Hasan Khan.

198 murders

FROM PAGE 1

"Considering Dhaka's population and socio-economic dynamics, the number of incidents is at a manageable level. We are successfully uncovering the motives behind most cases and arresting the perpetrators," the DC said.

Meanwhile, at least three people, including a listed criminal and a Jubo Dal leader, were shot dead in the capital over the last eight days.

Last night, Golam Kibria, member secretary of Jubo Dal's Pallabi unit, was shot dead in the Pallabi area.

Police said they are investigating the killing.

and returned to the returning officer within 16 to 28 days.

Chief Election Commissioner AMM Nasir Uddin, while inaugurating the app at the EC headquarters, said, "Currently, 1.3 crore Bangladeshis are living abroad who were previously deprived of voting rights. This initiative ends their disenfranchisement and strengthens democracy."

PUBLICITY CAMPAIGNS

Following meetings of the advisory council committees on economic affairs and government purchase at the Secretariat yesterday, Finance Adviser Salehuddin Ahmed announced that a cultural affairs ministry proposal for a voter awareness campaign had been approved in principle.

According to officials concerned, the government will spend Tk 25 crore on publicity to create a festive atmosphere ahead of the election.

The plan includes producing TVCs, video documentaries and other digital content, and displaying them through LED activation caravans in all 64 districts and 300 upazilas of the country.

In addition to government efforts, the EC has chalked out an extensive awareness campaign to inform people about the voting system, the electoral code, and other guidelines.

ROADMAP, READINESS

The EC unveiled its electoral roadmap in August. As part of the preparation, the government has made amendments to the Representation of the People

Order, 1972, in line with the EC's recommendations. The commission also made changes to the electoral code of conduct for the parties and candidates.

On September 4, the EC finalised the delimitation of 300 constituencies, redrawing the boundaries of 46 parliamentary seats in 16 different districts across the country. Disputes over the redrawing in some constituencies led to writ petitions being filed with the High Court. The commission is, however, hopeful that these petitions will be resolved within this month.

At the end of September, the EC launched a series of dialogues with stakeholders, including former election officials, observers, civil society representatives, university teachers, and journalists.

The commission has updated guidelines for journalists, observers, and polling station setup. Trainers are now being readied to guide election officials. Final selection and training will begin after the election schedule is declared.

The EC also met law enforcement and intelligence agencies on October 20 and top government officials on October 30.

Home Adviser Lt Gen (retd) Jahangir Alam Chowdhury, while meeting with German ambassador Rüdiger Lutz yesterday, said law enforcers were fully prepared to perform election duties.

The EC also met law enforcement and intelligence agencies on October 20 and top government officials on October 30.

Now, as Hasina has been convicted, the prosecution at the ICT is modifying its earlier application and will soon submit a fresh request seeking Interpol notices based on the conviction warrants, ICT Prosecutor Gazi Monawar Hossain Tamim told journalists on the ICT premises yesterday.

"The work on this process has already begun," he said.

After the ICT delivered judgment on Monday, the foreign ministry called upon India to immediately hand over convicted Hasina and Asaduzzaman.

In a statement, the ministry said, "Under the existing extradition treaty between the two countries, this is also an obligatory responsibility for India to hand over her to Bangladesh."

The interim government revoked the diplomatic passport of Hasina, putting her at risk of extradition. Her extradition falls within the legal framework of the extradition treaty signed between Bangladesh and India in 2013.

According to the treaty that was amended in 2016, "Extradition may be refused if the offence for which it is requested is an offence of a political character."

It also says that certain offences -- like murder -- "shall not be regarded as offences of a political character" for the purposes of the treaty.

However, one of the grounds for refusal of extradition is if the charges being pressed have not been "made in good faith, in the interest of justice".

A former Indian high commissioner to Bangladesh, seeking anonymity, told this newspaper that regardless of the law, the decision of Hasina's extradition will ultimately be a "political call".

According to Prof Sreeradha

Dhaka to seek Interpol help in getting Hasina, Kamal back

FROM PAGE 1

Talking to reporters at the foreign ministry yesterday evening, Foreign Adviser Touhid Hossain said Dhaka has not yet sent the letter. "The letter is being prepared. It may be sent today [yesterday]."

The ministry will not send the copy of the ICT verdict, but a note verbal to India.

After cases were filed against Hasina, Asaduzzaman, and others in connection with crimes against humanity, the National Central Bureau (NCB) of the Bangladesh Police had formally requested Interpol's help in issuing red notices against 12 people, including Hasina, who have been declared "absconding" and are living abroad.

Red notice is a global alert declared by Interpol to find a person and to provisionally arrest them pending extradition, surrender, or equivalent legal measures.

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A former Indian high commissioner to Bangladesh, seeking anonymity, told this newspaper that regardless of the law, the decision of Hasina's extradition will ultimately be a "political call".

Mentioning the fundamental rights enshrined in the constitution, he added that the constitution is the supreme law, and it will prevail over any laws of the land that curtail fundamental rights.

Ex-president Hamid's house attacked after ICT verdict against Hasina

A CORRESPONDENT, Kishoreganj

Former president Md Abdul Hamid's house in Kishoreganj's Mithamoin upazila was attacked and vandalised on Monday night, police said.

A group broke into the residence around 11:00pm, damaging furniture, doors, windows and several framed photos, Mithamoin Police Station Officer-in-Charge Alamgir Kabir told The Daily Star yesterday.

No casualties were reported, he said, adding that police and army personnel later visited the spot and security has since been tightened.

No arrests had been made at the time of filing the report last night.

According to local sources, a procession was brought out in Mithamoin Bazar after the International Crimes Tribunal handed down death sentences to deposed prime minister Sheikh Hasina and former home minister Asaduzzaman Khan Kamal. A faction of 20-30 individuals separated from the procession near Kamalpur village and broke into the former president's house before carrying out the vandalism.

Witness Kamrul Islam said the procession, reportedly joined by around 100 people and led by local BNP activists, began around 10:30pm, though he could not confirm who was involved in the subsequent attack.

Attempts to contact Upazila BNP President Md Jahidul Islam were unsuccessful, as his mobile phone was found switched off.

Police said legal procedures are underway and the situation in the area is currently under control.

NCP member, youth held for holding 'gun' against schoolboy's head

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Rangpur

Police have arrested a National Citizen Party member and another youth in connection with holding a "pistol" against a schoolboy's head during an altercation in Rangpur's Park intersection on Monday.

Ragib Hasnain, 30, NCP Rangpur Metropolitan Coordination Committee member, and Rakibul Islam, alias Tushar, 28, were detained by locals and handed to police around 8:00pm.

Dutta of international affairs at the OP Jindal Global University in India, extradition will neither be an easy nor a quick process.

"Bangladesh can request extradition, but I believe it will become a long-drawn judicial process. Even if Bangladesh revokes her passport, that might have no implication for India. India will question the decision and its legitimacy," Prof Dutta earlier told The Daily Star.

"Since a government politically opposed to Sheikh Hasina is the one prosecuting her, it might be perceived that she is fleeing political persecution and a threat to life. We have a history of looking after our friends."

PROSECUTOR'S STATEMENT

ICT Prosecutor Tamim said if Hasina and Asaduzzaman do not file their appeals within 30 days of the verdict delivery, they will lose the opportunity to appeal as they have been convicted under a special law.

Tamim was replying to reporters' queries.

He, however, said the Appellate Division has the authority to allow it for the sake of "complete justice, if nothing regarding this is mentioned in the law. But if a timeframe is mentioned in any special law, once the time is up, no appeal for condonation will be accepted."

Responding to another query regarding Hasina's comment that the verdict is politically motivated, and she did not get the opportunity to defend herself, Tamim said, "We welcome her remarks, as now the lawful path is open."

"She must surrender within 30 days, file an appeal, and present all her arguments before the Appellate Division. That court hears both sides and ensures justice."

Tamim said, "Let there be no misunderstanding, we categorically reject the claim that the trial was politically driven. The tribunal's proceedings were transparent to a standard that can withstand scrutiny before any court in the world. The documents and evidence we submitted would survive any legal challenge, anywhere. The punishment delivered here would be delivered there as well..."

Supreme Court lawyer Azizur Rahman Dulu, however, said that under the jurisdiction of complete justice provided by article 104 of the constitution, the Appellate Division has the authority to allow the application even after 30 days.

Mentioning the fundamental rights enshrined in the constitution, he added that the constitution is the supreme law, and it will prevail over any laws of the land that curtail fundamental rights.

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ICT CASE Witness recounts fatal shooting of Abu Sayed

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Former Begum Rokeya University, Rangpur (BRUR) student Shan E Rownok Basunia, while testifying before the International Crimes Tribunal 2 yesterday, recounted witnessing the fatal shooting of Abu Sayed during the quota reform protests on July 16, 2024.

Rownok appeared as the 19th prosecution witness before the three-member tribunal.

He described a tense standoff at Gate 1 of the university, where hundreds of students tried to enter the campus after learning that BCL activists had confined some students during the nationwide anti-discrimination movement.

It was then, he said, that police opened fire on the protesters.

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Workers wash winter vegetables in large drums after buying them from the wholesale market. With temperatures dipping in the capital, demand for winter vegetables has risen sharply. The photo was taken in South Jatrabari yesterday.

PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

Must commit to climate-resilient energy future

**CSOs urge parties, unveil
12-point manifesto for just,
green energy transition**

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

As the country moves toward the pivotal 2026 national elections, a coalition of prominent civil society organisations yesterday urged political parties to adopt bold, future-focused commitments to dismantle fossil fuel dependence, enhance national energy sovereignty and safeguard vulnerable communities through a just, equitable and climate-resilient energy transition.

The coalition released a 12-point Citizens' Manifesto at a press conference at Dhaka Reporters' Unity, calling on parties to commit to a transparent and renewable energy-based power sector.

"Despite attaining almost 100 percent electricity coverage, decades of imprudent fossil fuel dependence, opaque contractual regimes and impractical master plans have precipitated severe financial haemorrhaging, intensified environmental degradation and heightened public health risks," said Monower Mostafa, adviser at Coastal Livelihood and Environmental Action Network, while presenting the keynote paper.

He said national carbon emissions have doubled from 146.8 million tonnes in 2008 to 281.4 million tonnes now, while the country's air quality has deteriorated to among the world's most hazardous and placed Bangladesh at the bottom of major environmental performance indicators.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- » New energy policy ensuring climate resilience
- » Full disclosure of PPAs and IAs under RTI
- » Phase-out of fossil fuel subsidies
- » End LNG dependence, reduce gas waste
- » Clear roadmap for expanding renewable energy

Hasan Mehedi, member secretary of the Bangladesh Working Group on Ecology and Development, said private power producers extracted Tk 1,72,000 crore in capacity charges over the past 16 years, while Bangladesh Power Development Board recorded cumulative losses of Tk 2,53,000 crore. "The government had to inject Tk 2,36,000 crore in subsidies from public funds, which were disproportionately siphoned off into the coffers of fossil fuel-linked vested interests," he said.

The 12-point manifesto includes formulating a new national energy policy ensuring climate resilience, economic stability and long-term energy security; unveiling all Power Purchase Agreements and Implementation Agreements under the Right to Information Act; phasing out fossil fuel subsidies; ending LNG dependence and gas waste; and preparing a clear roadmap for renewable energy establishments.

The groups demanded a just energy transition that safeguards the rights of women, indigenous peoples, farmers, fishers, workers and marginalised communities, along with protection of agricultural land.

BWGED organised the event along with Bangladesh Environmental Lawyers Association, Bangladesh Institute of Labour Studies, Coastal Livelihood and Environmental Action Network, Ethical Trading Initiative Bangladesh, Lawyers for Energy, Environment and Development, Manushe Jonno Foundation, ReGlobal and allied partners.

A solo run or alliance with a big fish?

**NCP top brass at odds over decision;
grassroots want independent bid**

SHAMIMA RITA

Differences have emerged within the National Citizen Party over whether it should contest the upcoming national polls independently or join an electoral alliance.

Party insiders said top leaders, in recent general meetings, have instructed senior, mid-level and district coordinators to stay prepared for all possible strategies as internal debates intensify.

According to party sources, a large section of leaders across all tiers, from senior to grassroots, favours contesting the polls alone.

However, a significant faction within the top leadership argues that forming an alliance, or at least a seat-sharing deal, is necessary to ensure the party's long term stability and influence in the next government.

Over the past three weeks, discussions in party meetings and internal consultations have pushed Convenor Nahid Islam towards supporting an independent run,



**Interviews with three
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aligning with the majority view. Still, about half of the central leaders are leaning towards alliance options.

Interviews with three frontline central leaders reflect a clear divide. While most believe contesting alone would strengthen the party's grassroots organisational base, others feel an alliance is crucial for securing parliamentary representation or a role in national leadership.

A senior central leader, seeking anonymity, told The Daily Star, "As a new party, contesting independently may seem 'romantic' or 'aesthetic', but it carries real risks for NCP's political future. To become a strong opposition, we need at least 20 percent public support, and we are still building the preparation and financial strength needed for that."

He said a seat-sharing alliance would better secure the party's long-term prospects. "While a solo run may solidify our grassroots

SEE PAGE 4 COL 3



An illegally set-up truck stand occupies a significant portion of the Dhaka-Chittagong Highway beside the Jatrabari Fish Market, disrupting the movement of vehicles and pedestrians. The photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

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Country in state of instability

Says Fakhrul at late BNP leader
Moudud Ahmed's book launch

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir yesterday said Bangladesh is going through a period of instability.

"At this moment, we truly needed people like Barrister Moudud Ahmed. We are living in a state of instability, and he was undoubtedly someone who could have guided us out of it," he said at a book publication ceremony.

Politicians, government officials, experts, lawyers and journalists attended the event at a city hotel for late BNP leader and eminent lawyer Moudud Ahmed's book "Demise of Democracy", organised by University Press Limited.

Speakers reflected on his political life and contributions as a writer.

They said Moudud's writings would serve as a valuable guide for young people seeking to understand the country's political history. Although his work often criticised his own party, they noted he consistently tried to present true history.

During the panel discussion, Fakhrul said, "I feel sad that he could not live to see the fall of the fascist Hasina, which Moudud sincerely wanted to see."

He said young people involved in the recent mass uprising would find Moudud's books important. "There

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COURT CORNER

Ivy shown arrested
in 5 more cases

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Narayanganj

Police have shown former Narayanganj City Corporation mayor Salina Hayat Ivy arrested in five more cases. Court Police Inspector Kaim Khan said four were filed for murder and one for obstructing government work.

"Ivy is not named in any of these cases. None of the arrested accused gave any statement implicating her. She had already secured bail from the High Court. These sudden show-arrest petitions are aimed solely at delaying her release," said Ivy's counsel Awdad Hossain.

Petition challenges merger of 5 shariah-based banks

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A writ petition was filed with the High Court yesterday challenging the government's decision to merge five troubled shariah-based commercial banks into a new state-run Islamic lender named Sammilito Islami Bank Limited.

Shahidul Islam, a general investor in the share market, submitted the petition through Barrister Sayed Mahsib Hossain. The banks are First Security Islami Bank, Union Bank, Global Islami Bank, Social Islami Bank and Exim Bank.

Jatiya Chhatri Shakti, Shibir declare panels for JnU polls

JNU CORRESPONDENT

The Islami Chhatri Shibir and Jatiya Chhatri Shakti have announced their panels for the upcoming Jagannath University Central Students' Union (Jnucsu) election.

The university unit of Islami Chhatri Shibir unveiled its panel named "Adommo Jobian Oikya", at a press briefing in front of the Language Martyr Rafiq Bhaban yesterday.

The panel has nominated MdRiazul Islam, president of JnU Chhatri Shibir, for the post of vice president, and Abdul Alim Arif, secretary of JnU Chhatri Shibir, for the general secretary post.

Masud Rana, organiser of Up Bangladesh at JnU, has been nominated for the assistant general secretary post.

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TAIWAN ROW
Japan warns citizens in China about safety

AFP, Tokyo

Japan has warned its citizens in China to be careful of their surroundings and to avoid big crowds amid a diplomatic row over Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi's comments on Taiwan.

The escalating spat has already seen Beijing advise Chinese citizens to avoid travelling to Japan and hit Tokyo stocks. The screenings of at least two Japanese movies will also be postponed in China, state media reported.

"Pay attention to your surroundings and avoid as much as possible squares where large crowds gather, or places that are likely to be identified as being used by many Japanese people," the Japanese embassy in China said.

Beijing yesterday vowed to "protect the safety" of foreigners, but said it had reiterated a "strong protest" with Tokyo over Takaichi's comments.

Western aid cuts could cause 22.6m deaths

Say researchers; WFP warns 318 million people will face crisis-level hunger or worse next year

REUTERS, Washington

Abrupt cuts to development aid by major donor countries could cause up to 22.6 million additional deaths in developing countries by 2030, including 5.4 million children under five, according to a new study by the Barcelona Institute for Global Health (ISGlobal) and other organizations.

The warning comes as the United States, Britain, Germany and France have each reduced development aid for the first time in nearly three decades and are planning further cuts in 2025. The ISGlobal study said continued cuts could reverse decades of progress in global health and poverty reduction.

The global health research centre's report, a copy of which was viewed by Reuters, examined data from 93 low- and middle-income countries to estimate the impact of further reductions in official development assistance (ODA) in 2025, on top of sharp cuts over the past five years.

It concluded that a severe reduction in that assistance would



lead to 22.6 million additional deaths, including 5.4 million children under five, by 2030, significantly higher than the research institute had estimated in a previous study that focused on US cuts.

The authors modeled both a severe and a mild scenario for future aid cuts, along with one that would have maintained 2023 funding levels.

Meanwhile, the United Nations

World Food Programme (WFP) warned yesterday that the world is facing a deepening hunger crisis with resources falling far short of needs, citing sharp declines in humanitarian funding.

In its 2026 Global Outlook, the Rome-based WFP said 318 million people were expected to face crisis levels of hunger or worse next year, more than double the number in 2019.

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02	1161677	Supply of Tyre for cars of BSFIC Head Office.	30-Nov-2025 17:00	01-Dec-2025 12:00	01-Dec-2025 12:00
03	1161096	Supply of Batteries for cars of BSFIC Head Office.	30-Nov-2025 17:00	01-Dec-2025 12:00	01-Dec-2025 12:00

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লেকচারার (ইইরেজি)-এর ১টি স্থায়ী পদ। বেতন কেল: ২২০০০-৫৩০৬০/-

তত্ত্বাবধি পদসমূহের আবেদনপত্র জমাদানের শেষ তারিখ: ১০/১২/২০২৫ খ্রি

সকল পদের বিস্তারিত তথ্যের জন্য বুয়েট (regoffice.buet.ac.bd)-Vacancy-এর Job circular page-এ Search করা অথবা রেজিস্ট্রার অফিসের সংশ্লিষ্ট শাখায় সরাসরি যোগাযোগ করা যেতে পারে।

রেজিস্ট্রার

GD-2479

DHAKA WEDNESDAY NOVEMBER 19, 2025
AGRAHAYAN 4, 1432 BS
The Daily Star 5

Trump declines to rule out troops in Venezuela Floats talks with Maduro amid escalation

REUTERS, Washington

that he is willing to hold face-to-face talks with anyone interested.

"In the United States, whoever wants to talk with Venezuela will talk face to face, without any problem," Maduro said.

The US has been waging a campaign of deadly strikes against suspected drug trafficking boats off the Venezuelan coast and the Pacific coast of Latin America.

Maduro has repeatedly alleged that a US military buildup in the Caribbean is designed to drive him from power.

Taken as a whole, Trump's comments suggest he is willing to dramatically escalate his administration's confrontation with Venezuela, even as he is open to seeking an off-ramp if presented with an interesting enough proposal from the Venezuelan government.

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Office of the Executive Engineer, RHD
Telephone: 02587742145
Road Division, Nilphamari.
Email: rhdnil@gmail.com

Memo No. 35.01.7364.456.07.012.25-2197

Date: 17-11-2025

e-Tender Notice: No. 06/2025-2026

e-Tender is invited in the National e-GP System Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) for the following public procurement:

Sl. No	Tender ID No.	Name of work	Tender Document last selling/ downloading Date and Time	Tender Closing Date and Time
1.	1177729	Widening & Bituminous overlay with DBS Wearing Course from Ch. 360+257 (Chikli Bridge) to Ch. 364+467 (BSCIC Training Center) & Ch. 364+750 (Shuktrik Moor) to Ch. 373+567 (Rabeyar Moor) including necessary repairs of pavement distresses of Dhaka (Mirpur)-Uthali-Patulia-Natalkhola-Kashinathpur-Bogra-Rangpur-Beldanga-Bangladesh National Highway (N 5) under Road Division Nilphamari, as a part of the PMP (Major Roads) program for FY 2025-2026.	08 Dec-2025 17:00	09 Dec-2025 11:30

This is an online tender, where only e-Tenders will be accepted in the National e-GP Portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted. To submit e-Tender, registration in the National e-GP portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) is required.

The fees for downloading the e-Tender Documents from the National e-GP system portal have to be deposited online through any registered Bank branch up to particular date and time specified on the Tender Notice.

Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP System Portal and also can be obtained from e-GP help desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd). For more details please contact e-GP help desk contact numbers.

The Procuring Entity reserves the right to accept any or reject any or all tenders without assigning any reason whatsoever.

17-11-2025
(Md. Arif Zahan)
Sub-Assistant Engineer, RHD
Road Division, Nilphamari.

17-11-2025
(Md. Sultan Mahmud)
ID No. 602281
Executive Engineer (C.C), RHD
Road Division, Nilphamari.

গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার

ভূমি মন্ত্রণালয়

প্রকল্প পরিচালনকে কার্যালয়

ভূমি ব্যবস্থা পর্মা অটোমেশন প্রকল্প

তেজগাঁও, ঢাকা-১২০৮

www.lmap.minland.gov.bd

তারিখ: ১৪ অক্টোবর ১৪৫৩
১৪ মন্তেবের ২০২৫

উন্মুক্ত দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি (OTM)

গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার

ভূমি মন্ত্রণালয়

প্রকল্প পরিচালনকে কার্যালয়

ভূমি ব্যবস্থা পর্মা অটোমেশন প্রকল্প

তেজগাঁও, ঢাকা-১২০৮

১৪৫৩ মন্তেবের ২০২৫ বেলা ১০:০০

১৪৫৩ মন্তেবের ২

Banking clean-up is long overdue

Authorities must press ahead with the proposed changes to banking law

For years, our banking sector has been a case study in the perils of politically connected finance. Its image has been tainted by mounting bad loans, a culture of impunity for powerful defaulters, and the anomalous status of ailing state-owned banks. Against this backdrop, the 45 proposed amendments to the Bank Company Act represent the most significant attempt at financial reform in decades. The planned changes aim to establish unified oversight by the central bank for all lenders.

Among the proposals, abolishing the "specialised bank" status for state banks is long overdue. This classification has effectively placed some banks in a regulatory no-man's-land, allowing them to operate with capital adequacy exemptions and make senior appointments without central bank approval. The result has been a disaster as state banks emerged as the primary repositories of non-performing loans, with their balance sheets crippled by politically connected borrowers. Meanwhile, the proposed ban on sitting MPs, cabinet members, and local government representatives serving as bank directors is a direct assault on the nexus of political and financial power that has dictated credit flows for decades. Similarly, the tightening of rules on family directors by narrowing the cap, broadening the definition of family, and imposing a "cooling off" period for board members is a major step forward.

These reforms, if implemented, will dismantle the opaque corporate structures that have enabled rampant related-party lending. Reducing board sizes and mandating at least half of all directors to be independent professionals could also transform bank oversight. In a sector where boards have often been packed with relatives and political allies, this move towards professionalisation is vital. As Nazrul Huda, a former deputy governor of the central bank, rightly points out, smaller but expert boards are far more effective in governance.

Some of the more nuanced changes also reveal a pragmatic approach. Removing the controversial "willful defaulter" category, while seemingly a step back, is a sensible streamlining. The label, introduced in 2023, created a subjective and corruptible distinction, adding bureaucratic hassle without improving recovery rates. Maintaining a single, clear defaulter list is a more straightforward and enforceable system.

Of course, a draft law is only the beginning. The true test lies in its adoption and implementation. We must be aware that the clause barring politicians from boards, in particular, will be a lightning rod for opposition. The government must hold its nerve. To graduate from least developed country status and attract the investment needed for its next phase of growth, Bangladesh requires a stable financial system, but banking malpractices have long concentrated risk, eroded depositor trust, and ultimately necessitated costly capital injections. The proposed amendments promise to align our banking sector more closely with global standards. Thus, the interim government, and the next elected one, must see them through without wavering going forward.

Ensure the rights of persons with disabilities

Address the gaps between law and reality

It is most unfortunate that across Bangladesh, persons with disabilities, especially women and girls, continue to face various forms of discrimination that deny them basic rights, dignity, and opportunities. Despite laws, international commitments, and years of advocacy, people with disabilities still struggle to access education, healthcare, employment, and public spaces. For girls and women with disabilities, these challenges are compounded by social stigma and institutional neglect.

The experience of Jyoti Hossain, as revealed in a report by this daily, illustrates how systemic barriers can derail even the most determined individuals. Hailing from Jhikargachha, Jashore, Jyoti has excelled academically despite being confined to a wheelchair since age four. After earning top grades in her SSC and HSC exams, she pursued her dream of studying physics at Government MM College. However, the unavailability of accessible public transport and a third-floor physics lab without a lift made her studies nearly impossible. After a year of struggle, her teachers advised her to abandon physics, saying the practical work would be too difficult for her. Jyoti's experience is not unique; countless lives in Bangladesh are constrained by inaccessible campuses and discriminatory attitudes.

According to the latest population census by the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS), around 4.74 million people have some form of disability. Although Bangladesh has pledged to uphold their rights by enacting the Rights and Protection of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2013, ratifying the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD), and formulating the National Action Plan on Disability, enforcement remains weak. Many educational institutions still lack ramps, lifts, accessible toilets, or adapted learning materials. Even when students with disabilities enrol, they rarely receive the support needed to thrive.

The question is, why do institutional mechanisms meant to safeguard their rights remain ineffective? While the disability rights committees, from local to national levels, are legally required to meet regularly, many reportedly are inactive and under-resourced. The National Monitoring Committee on UNCRPD implementation has also not been functioning since 2017. Although Bangladesh is obliged to report to the UN every four years, it has submitted only one report in nearly two decades. This is very frustrating.

We, therefore, urge the government to urgently enforce the laws and conventions to safeguard the rights of persons with disabilities. The disability rights committees must be revitalised, properly staffed, and held accountable. A dedicated disability budget is also essential to achieve real progress. Most importantly, disability inclusion must be mainstreamed across ministries—not just confined to the Ministry of Social Welfare—to ensure meaningful change. Overall, the state must do everything in its power to enable this vulnerable community to live their lives with dignity.

EDITORIAL

Citizens deserve clarity before a referendum vote

An analysis of the four points of the referendum and the implementation order



WINKERS AWEIGH

Tanim Ahmed
is digital editor at The Daily Star.

TANIM AHMED

With the three main political players gearing up for elections, it appears that Chief Adviser Muhammad Yunus has managed to placate all sides with the four-point referendum proposal. They had fallen apart in bitter disagreement over the July charter ever since its signing in October. The chief adviser decided to address the nation as the parties remained entrenched in conflicting stances even after a one-week deadline from the government.

He outlined the key provisions of the July National Charter (Constitution Reform) Implementation Order signed earlier on Thursday, which has so far elicited a mostly favourable response from the parties. They have largely welcomed the order. There has not been much talk about the referendum itself or the order, however, which some have pointed out to be beyond the remit of the current government. The government has also not made any attempts yet to explain to the people what these points mean or even what the July charter really is. This article will strive to illustrate some issues raised by the referendum and other relevant aspects of the order. Let us discuss the four points of the referendum one by one.

Point one says that an election-time caretaker government, an Election Commission, and other constitutional institutions (i.e. the Ombudsman, the Comptroller and Auditor General, and the Public Service Commission) will be constituted in accordance with the procedures described in the July charter.

Except for the Election Commission, BNP had issued notes of dissent on appointments in each of the above. The party has been arguing that the formation of these institutions should be based on specific legislation and not be outlined in a manner that lacks accountability. The charter outlines several options to appoint the head of the caretaker government. While BNP agrees with the first two options, it had submitted a note of dissent when the third option is to be invoked. However, all those notes of dissent appear to have been brushed aside in the referendum.

The second point states that the next parliament will be bicameral. A 100-member upper house will be



formed on the basis of proportional representation of the votes received by political parties in the national election. It also states that any constitutional amendment will require a simple majority of the upper house.

Once again, BNP had registered its note of dissent both regarding proportional representation and the requirement of upper-house approval for constitutional amendments. The order again does not appear to heed BNP's notes of dissent. The party had contended that the upper house should reflect the distribution of seats in the lower house and, further, that since upper-house members are not directly elected, they should not have the power to weigh in on constitutional amendments.

The third point obligates the winning parties in the next election to implement the 30 proposals of the July charter that enjoy consensus among all parties. These include increasing women's representation in parliament, electing the deputy speaker and parliamentary committee chairpersons from the opposition, limiting the term of the prime

minister, enhancing the powers of the president, etc. This point places a binding commitment on the next ruling party that it must implement these proposals, although they are not exhaustively listed anywhere.

The fourth point states that other reforms mentioned in the July charter will be implemented as pledged by the political parties.

working days refer to the number of days that parliament will be in session or simply regular weekdays as the rest of us would think of them. If it refers to the parliament's sitting days, then it would take much longer than six months. In fact, it might take up to two years or more for parliament to sit for 180 days, during which time the council would remain operative.

VISUAL: ANWAR SOHEL

This acknowledges that parties may choose to implement other proposals as they see fit and according to the positions they submitted to the commission. This provision clearly recognises the notes of dissent of different parties, and thus BNP's objections regarding the Anti-Corruption Commission, the energy regulatory commission, or the appointment of the central bank governor will come into play, since none of these are constitutional bodies.

The implementation order also envisions a Constitutional Reform Council that will be effective for 180 working days starting from the first sitting of the incoming parliament. Further, this council will double as a parliament and as a reform council to institute constitutional changes outlined in the July charter. The order states that constitutional reform proposals will require a simple majority of the council to be carried through.

Now, at first reading, it appears that the 180 days amount to six months or more since they are described as "working days". However, there is still a distinction to be made as to whether

Also, the simple majority requirement does away with the two-thirds majority rule for changing the constitution, which in spirit contradicts the current constitution. This also creates the danger of the ruling party or coalition making other changes to the constitution, or changing parts that were not on the table to begin with. Further, this simple-majority rule would eliminate any requirement that amendments be bipartisan. The two-thirds rule at least assured broader support within parliament.

On the face of it, BNP appears to have softened its stance on most of its objections, as have Jamaat and NCP. Thankfully, it seems parties are willing to move away from their initial positions and gear up for elections.

However, the people still have a right to know, since they will be voting yes or no. The provisions of the charter aside, the points of the referendum itself require thorough clarification from the government so that citizens know exactly what they are voting for and its potential consequences. After all, it is the people whom the government must cater to, not just the political parties.

A historic verdict that carries weight even in absentia



Maisha Islam Monamee
is a graduate from the Institute of Business Administration (IBA), University of Dhaka.

MAISHA ISLAM MONAMEE

There is a curious weight in witnessing a moment that feels like the culmination of years of waiting, even if the full consequence of that moment may never be realised. The verdict on Sheikh Hasina carries precisely that weight as a symbolic punctuation to a decade of fear, suffering, and quiet endurance. In a country where power so often felt untouchable, where law could be bent to protect those with influence and destroy those without, the decision to hold Hasina accountable is not merely judicial but also personal.

To speak of justice in abstract terms is simple. Scholars debate procedure, diplomats discuss optics, international media deliberate fairness, and foreign governments weigh consequences. But those frameworks rarely capture the intimate, almost physical relief that comes from seeing a powerful figure confronted with accountability. There is a long history of people waiting in court corridors that seemed endless, of families pressing photographs into the hands of reluctant officials, of citizens carrying memories of disappeared friends, neighbours, and colleagues, and of loved ones killed in protests. Justice has often been absent, delayed,

or warped to suit politics. There is a reason why this verdict feels like a personal win. It is because we have had to live under the shadow of her choices and watch the erosion of the everyday sense of safety, the subtle conditioning of our minds, the quiet fear in public spaces, the erosion of civic confidence. Accountability, even if delayed, restores a sense of moral order. It confirms that cruelty leaves traces that the world cannot ignore indefinitely.

This is why the debates framed in diplomatic language feel insufficient. When discussions revolve around whether a death sentence complicates her extradition, whether India will cooperate, or how the United Nations will respond, they obscure the emotional reality for citizens who have spent years negotiating life under fear.

For these citizens, this sentence is neither a matter of politics nor of optics; it is a matter of recognition. A recognition that public accountability is possible, even if partially. So, while the world debates the technicalities, the symbolism of the verdict cannot be overstated. For the families of the disappeared, the survivors of forced disappearances and institutionalised

cruelty, the families of the around 1,400 people killed in the uprising, and thousands more injured for life, its significance is immeasurable.

There is a certain inevitability in our emotional reaction. Those of us who carried the burden of witnessing injustice or suffered directly at its hands feel a sense of vindication. It is as if, at last, the moral ledger has been balanced, even if the numbers can never fully account for the enormity of our losses. Justice, in this sense, is an echo of recognition; an affirmation that what was endured matters, that those who once felt powerless are not entirely unheard. This is historic precisely because it exists in tension with what came before. For too long, the apparatus of the state allowed selective justice to define the rules. Decisions were guided by proximity to power, by allegiance, and by fear. Ordinary citizens—the witnesses, the silent sufferers—were forced to inhabit a parallel reality: a world in which laws existed, but rarely for them. The sentence against Hasina disrupts that parallel.

Of course, there is no guarantee that this moment will translate into lasting systemic change. The procedural aftermath, the international commentary, and the political manoeuvres that follow will test the depth of this symbolic victory. However, this moment affirms that ordinary citizens, who watched power move like a tidal wave over their lives, have a stake in the moral universe that the law is meant to inhabit. Hasina's sentence does not erase any of their sufferings, but it places them in a

moral context where they are no longer invisible. That alone, in a country where invisibility has often been the default condition for those outside power, is transformative.

Perhaps the most profound aspect of this moment is the way it reframes the imagination of possibility. To see accountability reach a figure perceived for so long as untouchable opens a conceptual space. It allows us to imagine a society in which systems, though flawed, are not entirely devoid of redress. It allows a generation to measure possibility not by fear alone, but by the courage and persistence of those who upheld principle until the moment of recognition arrived. The debate over fairness and proportionality is not insignificant. Legal scholars, diplomats, and international observers will continue to dissect, question, and deliberate over the technical merits of the sentence. That discourse matters in its own domain. Yet for citizens who have experienced the consequences of unchecked authority, those considerations are secondary to the emotional and symbolic resonance of accountability.

History will judge the verdict in its own way, but for those who lived under the shadow of Hasina's regime, the personal significance precedes history. In the end, the importance of the sentence rendered on Hasina is not confined to law or politics. It is a moment that will enter collective memory as proof that justice, even when deferred, can arrive—and when it does, it feels like a personal triumph for all who lived under its absence.

'Owners' fear of unions stems from their loss of control'

In the wake of the recent amendments to Bangladesh's labour law, Kalpona Akter, president of Bangladesh Garment and Industrial Workers Federation, spoke with Monorom Polok of The Daily Star about factory owners' anxieties over the new unionisation rules, the inclusion of domestic and non-profit workers under legal protection, and other issues.

How do you respond to owners' associations' concern that allowing just 20 workers to form a union could disrupt production and create chaos in factories?

Before I offer my perspective, it is important to first clarify where responsibility lies. The factory owners themselves are entirely responsible for the situation they now call harmful to the industry. For all the things involved, there is no one else to blame—not the workers, not the labour leaders, not the government, not any international organisation.

About seven or eight years ago, a complaint was filed with the International Labour Organization (ILO) governing body under Article 26 against Bangladesh for violating Conventions 87 and 98—those concerning freedom of association and collective bargaining. It clearly showed, with evidence, that workers in Bangladesh were not free to form or join trade unions.

Drawing from my experiences, this is not something entirely new. Around three decades ago, when I used to work in a garment factory, I was expelled and blacklisted simply because I joined and facilitated the formation of a union. The situation has not changed even today, as owners treat it like a crime whenever workers try to form unions or even express interest in learning more about their rights. They harass workers inside and outside the factory premises, often dismiss them, and even physically assault them. Sometimes the workers are also forced to leave their communities.

The owners believed that since they had possessed political connections and power for the last 15 or 16 years, it would always remain the same for them. They regarded themselves as kings and the workers as merely subjects. Subsequently, even after the ILO complaint, they did not seem to consider it seriously.

The interim government has now removed this obstacle for two main reasons: firstly, the working class and trade unions have

been fighting for their rights for years now. Secondly, the government could not risk losing credibility in the international arena. The ILO had already been pushing for compliance, and both the European Union and the US trade channels, which have major business ties with Bangladesh, have been putting pressure in this regard. Thus, this change was inevitable and long overdue.

The owners' fear that this change will disrupt work is a misplaced perception. At least a single union was bound to be formed. Earlier, the law allowed up to three unions in a factory. However, for years, the owners' syndicate used their influence and did not allow even one union to form or exist in a functioning way. Now, there might be more than one, depending on the situation. In some factories, unions might form with seven percent of workers; in others, it can be 12 percent or 13 percent, and in some cases, unions can be formed with 20 percent of workers. Depending on the factory size, the magnitude of the unionisation will vary. On the workers' front, this is a major achievement.

Earlier, there was some sort of arrangement with the labour ministry that if one union were registered, no second one would be approved. Garment owners took advantage of this loophole, and also formed what we call "yellow unions," created by the management itself. They now claim that there are 1,400 unions in operation, but in reality, more than half are defunct. There are fewer than 50 factories with any active Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA).

So, this fear the owners express is less about disruption and more about losing control. Although they verbally acknowledge workers as an equal part of the system, they merely believe in it. If they did, they would have agreed to sit down for negotiations. Furthermore, owners take part in spreading misinformation as well, as seen in the Adamjee Jute Mills case. They claimed that the mill closed down because of labour unions, which is based on no truth. Adamjee was shut down



Kalpona Akter

mainly due to political interference and mismanagement, not unionisation.

If both owners and workers are willing to comprehend and respect the amended law, even five unions in one factory will not be an issue, as negotiations would go through a CBA process.

The amended law also brings domestic workers, seafarers, and non-profit employees under legal protection for the first time. What is your assessment of this inclusion?

It is truly historic. Just two days before the amendment, the ILO ratified three major conventions. I was a bit disappointed that Bangladesh had not ratified Convention 189 on domestic workers, but later, the amendment eased my disappointment.

For the first time, domestic workers,

seafarers, and non-profit workers—who have long been invisible—are now being recognised under the amended law. That is a remarkable step forward.

But we also need to talk about what this means in practice. For domestic workers, the biggest change will be in how employers treat them. Of course, we are yet to know about the extent of benefits that are to be included in the final gazette. But even with the amendments in place, there is a cultural barrier at play, as domestic workers are often disregarded as "workers" due to social stigma.

For example, in a household, a domestic worker might work from 12pm to 3pm, including lunchtime. But providing lunch to the worker is often at the mercy of the household owner or employer. If a domestic worker requests lunch, it is often considered unacceptable, although it might fall well within the worker's rights.

However, domestic workers often have more negotiation power than, say, garment workers. Employers cannot just dictate terms. Domestic workers often set their own rates and even ask for a raise. That can be seen in a positive light. Nevertheless, domestic workers tend to face more serious issues than other workers, such as domestic abuse, sexual harassment, and gender-based violence. That is why legal protections for them are absolutely crucial. Moreover, most of our recommendations for the amendments were included in the final gazette, and it shows progress, even if small.

Bangladesh has often been praised for passing progressive laws, but implementation remains a challenge. How do you think this new amendment might be implemented?

Implementation is going to be the real test. On paper, it looks good, but without proper enforcement, it will be rendered meaningless.

If we look at our history, no government has ever truly stood on the side of the workers. They have always adhered to the interests of the businesses. The first responsibility of

the next government must be to break that pattern. In this case, the interim government has shown some commitment, and the political parties campaigning to assume power have also shown support. But we need to learn from our past and refrain from repeating the same pattern.

Additionally, we need proper infrastructure to make implementation feasible. For example, the Department of Inspection for Factories and Establishments (DIFFE) has repeatedly complained about insufficient manpower and resources. If the state can recruit hundreds of police officials, why not more inspectors to protect workers' rights? Bangladesh has over seven crore workers; therefore, protecting their rights should be a national priority. A large, well-resourced, and sustained institution must be built for this purpose.

The pilot project, the Employment Injury Insurance (EII) scheme, is also an important step in this process. If it can be actualised into a law and implemented properly, it could cover all workers nationwide. Whatever may be the case, we cannot leave things on paper. Implementation must start; there is no alternative to it.

We are living in a changing time, and I'm hopeful. People from all walks of life have become more politically aware, and the actions of the government do not easily go unchecked anymore. Therefore, there lies a strong scope for accountability, and the law must be implemented accordingly.

Finally, what message would you give to both workers and owners as this transition unfolds?

To the workers, I would suggest staying united, knowing their rights, and utilising the fresh avenue the amendments have offered. For the owners, they must accept the change and cooperate. They have long benefited from a system that silenced workers, but that time has come to an end. If both sides approach with mutual respect, this can be a turning point in Bangladesh's labour history.

WORLD TOILET DAY

Removing barriers to women's access to public toilets is long overdue



Peya Jannatul
is an advocate at the Supreme Court of Bangladesh.

PEYA JANNATUL

Access to clean public toilets is not only a basic human right, it also draws a distinction between a life of dignity versus one of humiliation. With the way most public toilets in this country are maintained, it is difficult for anyone to feel human using them. For women, who are disproportionately impacted by not only having to worry about hygiene but also their safety, this experience becomes almost trauma-inducing.

Dhaka, a city of 20 million residents and commuters, has only 198 public toilets combinedly under the two city corporations. Most of these facilities are unsafe, unclean and not gender-segregated. A 2025 WaterAid report found that 35 percent of women actively avoid using public toilets when outside their homes, and of those, 74 percent reduce their water intake to cope. These statistics should ring an alarm for the government. But the irony is that even government establishments lack adequate toilet facilities for women. According to a study conducted by Brac, of the 192 subordinate courts across 64 districts, only 24 percent have separate female toilets. If women are as unpalatable as it sounds, there is a brutal social practice mostly ignored and angrily tolerated, popular in our part of the subcontinent: a significant section of men, often those involved in the informal sector, resort to urinating in the open, by drains, or on footpaths. That is filthy and wrong, but still an option. Even though it sounds harrowing, women do not even have that option without risking harassment or assault. The city's sanitation failure becomes a gendered violence of omission.

Even middle-class and upper-middle-class women are not spared from this systemic horror. So, one can only shudder at how disproportionately this burden falls on marginalised women, the invisible workforce that keeps cities functioning. The 2022 Joint Monitoring Programme for Water

Supply, Sanitation and Hygiene assessment shows only about 59.3 percent of people in Bangladesh have access to a "decent toilet of their own," which means millions remain dependent on shared, inadequate, or non-existent facilities.

Garment workers endure excruciatingly long-hour shifts with too few toilets meant for thousands. Construction labourers spend full days on sites, often with no facilities. Street vendors cannot leave stalls; domestic workers are sometimes denied employer bathrooms; women commuters often travel for hours with no safe stops. Women in slums share overcrowded latrines, many without locks or lights; women with disabilities face physical barriers; transgender and hijra women risk harassment in gendered spaces. This is a testament to how infrastructure actively restricts half its population from full participation in public life.

As unpalatable as it sounds, there is a brutal social practice mostly ignored and angrily tolerated, popular in our part of the subcontinent: a significant section of men, often those involved in the informal sector, resort to urinating in the open, by drains, or on footpaths. That is filthy and wrong, but still an option. Even though it sounds harrowing, women do not even have that option without risking harassment or assault. The city's sanitation failure becomes a gendered violence of omission.

The consequences of such dysfunctional machinery get translated into health crises. Women, compelled to remain dehydrated or suppress urination, suffer a cluster of health problems that are quietly becoming epidemic. Urinary tract

infections, kidney complications and chronic dehydration among young working women are common conditions now found among Dhaka's female populace. A recent comprehensive hospital-toilet survey found low cleanliness and dangerously high user-to-toilet ratios in both government and private hospitals, undermining infection control inside healthcare facilities themselves.

We obviously overlook the psychosocial harm as well. The fear of harassment or assault when seeking a toilet, the traumatic aspect of it, is never accounted for in our data. Development statistics may celebrate "toilets built," but they rarely capture how many women avoid them out of fear. For instance, public toilets in Farmgate, Sadarghat, Gulistan, New Market, Jatrabari and Kamalapur, some of the busiest junctions in the country, are routinely avoided by women due to being dark and unguarded.

As a lawyer and a woman who moves in public spaces, I find it deeply troubling that something as basic as a toilet still determines how freely women can participate in society. This is not simply a matter of infrastructure but of justice. Dignity is not a privilege reserved for the few; it is a right owed to every woman, whether she stands in a courtroom or sells vegetables at a street corner. And those of us with influence must stop treating sanitation as an embarrassing subject, because silence is what sustains suffering.

Admittedly, this issue cannot be changed overnight. However, if prioritised properly, it is solvable within an accepted timeframe. Facilities must be designed with women in mind, and social awareness must dismantle the taboo and the unsafe and unhygienic practices surrounding public sanitation. WaterAid and municipal partnerships have piloted modern public toilets used millions of times; Brac-supported social enterprises such as Bhumijo have converted dark, filthy blocks into clean, women-friendly spaces within weeks.

Bangladesh has even piloted star ratings for public toilets to incentivise quality. These are living proofs that the problem is not a technical impossibility but a priority failure.

If we are serious about dignity, gender equality and public health, the policy response must be immediate and non-cosmetic. First, public toilets must align with national women-friendly standards. To start with the very basics, ensure proper locks and lighting, running water and soap,

menstrual-waste disposal, ramps for mobility and female attendants. Workplaces like factories, markets, bus and rail stations, courts and hospitals must be legally required to provide safe, accessible toilets, with enforceable penalties for non-compliance. Instead of a one-off construction budget, funds should be allocated for continuous maintenance.

Success would reflect in the form of metrics that count usability for women, not just an increase in the

number of toilet facilities. How many toilets are open at night? How many have locks and water supply? How many are used by women safely and consistently?

On this World Toilet Day, let policymakers, industry leaders and city managers stop celebrating "coverage" on paper and start delivering usable dignity on the ground. The question is not whether we can fix this. The question is if and when we will finally decide to do so.



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Accelerating & Strengthening Skills for Economic Transformation (ASSET) Project

Memo No: 57.03.9131.304.07.007.25-32

Date: 17/11/2025

e-Tender Notice

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

Tender ID No.	Package No	Package Description	Tender Publication Date and Time	Tender Closing & Opening Date and Time
1166891	ASSET-SPI-25-26-GD-01	Supply of Equipment for Mechanical Technology & Fan for Sylhet Polytechnic Institute	18-Nov-2025 10:00:00	08-Dec-2025 11:30:00
1167024	ASSET-SPI-25-26-GD-02	Supply of Equipment for Civil Technology	18-Nov-2025 10:00:00	08-Dec-2025 11:30:00
1169686	ASSET-SPI- 25-26-WD-01	Refurbishment Work of Academic Building, Principal Room, Conference Room, Lab, Placement Cell, Classroom	18-Nov-2025 10:00:00	08-Dec-2025 11:30:00

This is an online Tender, where only e-Tender will be accepted in the National e-GP Portal; and offline or hard copies will not be accepted. To submit e-Tender, registration in the National e-GP System portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) is required. Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP Portal and from e-GP help desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd).


(Mohammed Rehan Uddin)
 Principal (Additional Charge)
 Phone: 02-9966-32529

'NOTHING BEATS A JET2 HOLIDAY'

How the algorithm reintroduces forgotten tracks

MAISHA TASnim Sreshtha

Every few weeks, yet another old song seems to find its way back into the spotlight. Once off the charts, they are suddenly everywhere again – resurfacing in TikTok videos and Instagram Reels as if they never left. These unexpected comebacks have now become the most fascinating patterns in today's algorithm-led music culture. And now the question is whether listeners are drawn to the song itself, or to the catchy edit that's keeping audiences hooked.

Jess Glynne's *Hold My Hand*, though you'd probably recognise it as the "Nothing beats a Jet2 Holiday" song – learned this in a bizarre way. The cheerful pop anthem from 2015 had long since retired from the spotlight. And then, *Jet2*. A holiday commercial with enthusiastic sunshine shots collided with TikTok, and suddenly Glynne's chorus was a spiritual call to arms for anyone fantasising about escaping their life. Within months, the resurrected song amassed billions of views. A decade-old track now clawed its way back into the charts after meme culture decided it deserved a second chance. Imagine, as an artist, watching your old work explode again, not because of your craft, but because someone slowed it down and paired it with clips of people packing for Bali.

What can be considered mind-blowing was realising what these reels can do. I stumbled onto a ridiculously catchy track, a rap blended into a melody so smooth you'd want to hear it one more time. It was all over my feed, with thousands of people doing duets to it. Only later did I realise it wasn't one seamless song at all, but a mash-up of Nicki Minaj's *Beez in the Trap* (2013) and 4 Non Blondes' *What's Up?* (1993). The sound has since been used in more than 695,000 TikTok videos, sending *Beez in the Trap* streaming up by over 460% and pulling *What's Up?* back into a wave of renewed listeners.

Kate Bush's *Running Up That Hill* is another recipient of this viral fever.



VISUAL: MAISHA TASnim Sreshtha

The song sat quietly for years, ignored by mainstream charts. Then a *Stranger Things* fan edit slapped a dreamy, slowed-down version underneath a montage of fictional teenagers fighting demonic forces. The clip spread like wildfire. Suddenly, Ghost had their first-ever Billboard Hot 100 entry. Thanks

not to touring, not to marketing, but to a TikTok aesthetic that made everything sound like it was engineered to live rent-free in your head.

And then there is the TikTok obsession with PinkPantheress's song *Illegal*, the source of the now-ubiquitous line: "Ooh, is this illegal? Ooh, it feels illegal." What started as a lyric has mutated into a full-fledged TikTok language. People use it under Reels about dyeing their hair at 2 am, booking spontaneous trips, trying

on outfits that feel out-of-character, or listening to music that doesn't match their "aesthetic."

Lady Gaga's *Bloody Mary* was comparatively obscure when stacked up with the singer's long list of hits. TikTok took one lyric: "I'll dance, dance, dance..." – sped it up, tossed it onto Wednesday Addams' deranged school dance routine, and unleashed a cultural avalanche. The original song, ignored for more than a decade, charted worldwide. The version people loved wasn't even the one Gaga released; it was the edited, ghost-haunted TikTok cut.

What's most noticeable about this trend is not just its reach, but how precise it becomes. These creators edit with frightening accuracy. Because TikTok doesn't care about the full song, they know exactly which lyric will become a

meme and which beat drop is perfect for a shaky "POV: you're having a breakdown in public" transition.

If there's one thing this entire phenomenon reveals, it's that the algorithm doesn't recognise eras, genres, or artistic intent; it recognises utility. A song is valuable only if it can serve a mood, trend or micro-aesthetic. And Gen-Z, having spent most of their lives online, instinctively searches for sounds that help them express themselves in more dramatic ways. These revivals say less about the songs and more about the emotional outsourcing happening on social media where teenagers are borrowing feelings from older music because contemporary music doesn't always give them the emotional validation they crave.



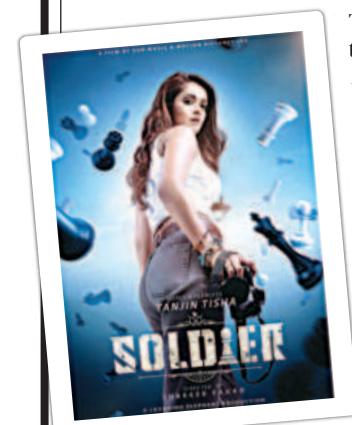
Tom Cruise honoured with honorary Oscar

Hollywood icon Tom Cruise has received the Academy Honorary Award – widely recognised as an honorary Oscar – at the 16th Governors Awards held Sunday, November 16, at the Ray Dolby Ballroom in Hollywood, California, Variety reported.

The 63-year-old star, a four-time Oscar nominee, was honoured for his longstanding contributions to cinema. The award was presented by filmmaker Alejandro G. Iñárritu, who is currently collaborating with Cruise on an upcoming film slated for release in October 2026.

In his speech, Cruise said filmmaking has taken him around the world and deepened his sense of shared humanity. "That's why cinema matters to me," he said. "Filmmaking isn't just what I do – it's who I am."

Tanjin Tisha's character look from 'Soldier' unveiled



Tanjin Tisha's look from the upcoming film *Soldier* has been unveiled shortly after Shakib Khan's first poster. In the film, Tisha portrays a strong, fearless, and strategic character. The newly released poster shows her in a white top and grey pants, holding a camera with a determined expression, while floating chess pieces suggest a story driven not just by action but by intelligence and tactical planning.

Directed by Shakeeb, the film is slated for a 2026 theatrical release. Set against a patriotic backdrop, *Soldier* also features Tariq Anam Khan, Tauquir Ahmed, and Jannatul Ferdous Oishee in prominent roles.

NEWS

Campaign posters flood the capital

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belong to BNP hopefuls, though Jamaat-e-Islami candidates and several smaller parties, including Khelafat Majlis, Gano Sanghati Andolok, Amar Bangladesh Party, Gano Adhikar Parishad, Bangladesh Jatiya Party, Bangladesh Biplobi Workers Party, and the Communist Party of Bangladesh, are also visible across the city.

Posters were found in abundance during visits to Farmgate, Indira Road, Manik Mia Avenue, Mirpur Road, Dhamondi, Segunbagicha, Purana Paltan, Bijoynagar, Motijheel, Gulistan, Kakrail, Moghbazar, Karwan Bazar, Uttara, Gulshan, and Mirpur.

Against this backdrop, Dhaka North City Corporation (DNCC) yesterday issued a notice asking residents to remove illegal boards, posters, banners, billboards, and LED displays within seven days. Otherwise, eviction drives will begin, with fines or legal action against violators.

DNCC said many installations have

been set up illegally on walls and rooftops without approval.

The Graffiti Writing and Poster Sticking Control Act, 2012 prohibits posters outside designated spots, with fines up to Tk 10,000 or 30 days in jail. Failure to pay the fine can result in additional 15 days of imprisonment, and offenders must remove the posters at their own expense. Beneficiaries of illegal posters can face Tk 10,000-50,000 fines or similar jail terms.

However, violations remain rampant.

Officials of DNCC and Dhaka South City Corporation (DSCC) admitted they are facing difficulties in controlling the surge of these illegal activities despite regular drives.

Adil Mohammad Khan, president of the Bangladesh Institute of Planners, said enforcement is weak despite Bangladesh having a specific law, which many countries lack.

"In today's digital age, the need for physical posters has almost

disappeared. Still, if they must be used, rules should be clear. Repeated violations without accountability only encourage impunity," he said.

"Just having a law isn't enough. Who will enforce it? Citizens must also be part of the solution," he said.

He said political parties put up posters as no one questions them. The punishment is also minimal.

"We need stronger social accountability. Illegal posters should backfire as negative publicity," he said.

DNCC Administrator Mohammad Azad said, "We are trying to remove the posters every day, but there's no cooperation. We urge leaders to use digital platforms, but some even ask us not to remove posters. We will continue drives and take punitive action if needed."

DSCC Chief Waste Management Officer Air Commodore Md Mahabubur Rahman Talukder added that stronger measures will be discussed with senior authorities soon.

Arson attacks, crude bomb blasts persist

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branch's manager.

Consequently, many important official documents and office furniture were burnt.

Upon receiving the information, firefighters rushed to the spot and brought the fire under control, said Billal Mridha, station master of Mohammadpur Fire Service and Civil Defence.

Police personnel were sent to the scene immediately, said Abdur Rahman, the officer-in-charge (OC) of Mohammadpur Police Station. However, the extent of the damage is

yet to be determined.

An investigation will be carried out to assess the losses, he added.

Meanwhile in Bogura, police recovered three crude bomb-like objects in front of the Grameen Bank's Mathurapur branch office in Dhunai Upazila.

Dhunai Police Station OC Saidul Islam confirmed the recovery, adding that the objects had not been defused as of last evening.

In Dhaka, a crude bomb went off on the court premises yesterday.

A crude bomb was suddenly hurled targeting the office of the

Metropolitan Public Prosecutor around 4:15pm, which blasted soon, Dhaka Metropolitan Public Prosecutor Omar Faruq Faruqi told The Daily Star.

No one was injured in the incident, he said.

Meanwhile, the Counter Terrorism and Transnational Crime (CTTC) unit of the Dhaka Metropolitan Police (DMP) recovered six crude bombs from a house in the Darus Salam area, DMP said in a press release.

The bomb disposal unit of the CTTC neutralised the crude bombs at the Golar Tek ground at around 2:25pm.

Hasina sentence violates fair trial standards

FROM PAGE 12

both were prosecuted in absentia, not represented by counsel of their choosing, and sentenced to death, raising serious human rights concerns.

The Bangladeshi authorities committed serious human rights violations during the three weeks of protests in July and August 2024 that toppled the Hasina government.

While those responsible for abuses should be appropriately held to account, the prosecution failed to meet international fair trial standards, including for a full opportunity to present a defense and question the witnesses against them, and the right to be represented by counsel of one's action.

Foreign Adviser Touhid Hossain and Indian External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar met twice – on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly in September last year and at the 8th Indian Ocean Conference in Oman in February.

choosing. Concerns over the fairness of the trial are exacerbated by the death sentences, the New York-based rights organisations said.

Trials in absentia fundamentally undermine the right to a fair trial as set out in article 14 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), which is crucial to a legitimate legal process, the statement mentioned.

The rights organisation alleged the International Crimes Tribunal proceedings during Hasina's rule repeatedly failed to meet international fair trial standards and imposed the death penalty. Human Rights Watch opposes the death penalty in all circumstances because of its inherent cruelty.

The HRW urged the government to respond to any demonstrations in accordance with the UN Basic Principles on the Use of Force and Firearms by Law Enforcement Officials. Awami League leaders should discourage violence by party supporters opposing the tribunal verdict, it said.

"Victims of grave rights violations committed under the Hasina government need justice and reparations through proceedings that are genuinely independent and fair," Ganguly said. "Ensuring justice also means protecting the rights of the accused, including by abolishing the death penalty, which is inherently cruel and irreversible."

Brazil unveils

FROM PAGE 12
on pathways to help countries "progressively" overcome their dependency on fossil fuels."

A third option proposes no text at all. The draft also raises the possibility of assessing national climate pledges annually, instead of every five years, to assess global progress in reducing greenhouse gas emissions more frequently. It also suggested financial assistance from wealthy countries to developing ones for adaptation to climate change should be tripled by 2030 or 2035 – a key demand from poorer nations.

Proposals to address concerns over trade were also included, as China leads a push in Belém against "unilateral" measures and the EU's carbon price on imports in particular.

On this sensitive issue, four proposals were outlined in the draft, including the creation of a summit under the UN Secretary-General on climate trade disputes.

Khalilur reaches Delhi

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asked whether his colleague would raise the extradition issue with India, reports UNB.

He said, if it necessary, Khalilur can certainly raise the [extradition] issue. However, the issue will be raised through official channel.

Asked whether Khalilur would hold any bilateral meeting on the sidelines of the regional forum, diplomatic sources in Dhaka and Delhi said it was unlikely. Regional security, maritime domain, cyber security are some of the major issues to be discussed at the Colombo Security Conclave.

DNCC said many installations have

Mushfiqur's 100th Test today

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captains Habibul Bashar and Akram Khan, as well as current skipper Najmul Hossain Shanto.

A symbol of longevity and resilience, Mushfiqur, who made his Test debut in 2005 against England at Lord's, is now in his 20th year of international cricket. He is also the country's highest run-getter in the format, with 6,351 runs at an average of 38.02, including three double hundreds.

In the first Test against Ireland in Sylhet last week, the right-hander

scored 23 off 52 balls, striking three boundaries, and did not need to bat in the second innings thanks to Bangladesh's innings victory. But given his years of dedication, grit, and desire, he will undoubtedly hope to mark his 100th Test with a century, or more, with a truly memorable knock.

He already has a ton this year, a 163 against Sri Lanka in Galle, and will look to build further on his legacy as Bangladesh's most experienced Test cricketer. This will be the second visit by a

government adviser to India since the interim administration took charge. In February, Energy Adviser Muhammad Fauzul Kabir Khan went there to attend India Energy Week.

Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus and Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi held a meeting on the sidelines of the BIMSTEC summit in April.

Foreign Adviser Touhid Hossain and Indian External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar met twice – on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly in September last year and at the 8th Indian Ocean Conference in Oman in February.

The platform demanded the immediate withdrawal of the November 2 scrapping order and reinstatement of the August 28 gazette, along with the mandatory inclusion of music, fine arts, and physical education mandatory in primary schools.

The statement was coordinated by Mahmud Selim, convenor of the platform. Prominent citizens endorsing it include Emeritus Professor Serajul Islam Choudhury, artist Anwar Hossain, theatre personality Mamunur

Hossain, journalist Abed Khan, writer Selina Hossain, poet Nirmalendu Goon, Fauzia Moslem, lawyer Zia Khan Panna, AN Rasheda, Prof MM Akash, Niranjan Adhikari, journalist Sohrab Hassan, and rights activist Khushi Kabir.

Leaders of teacher associations such as Jahangir Hossain, Nure Alam Biplob, Md Abul Kashem, Mostafizur Rahman Shine, Muhammad Ifias Hossain, Tushar Chandan, and Shahinur Al-Amin were also among the 80 signatories.

Signatory organisations include Bangladesh Uidchi Shilpigoshti, Rabindra Sangeet Shilpi Sangstha, Sangeet Sangathan Samannay Parishad, Nazrul Sangeet Shilpi Parishad, Ganosangeet Samannay Parishad, Shilpkala Bidyalay Jote, Bangladesh Baul O Loko Shilpi Sangstha, Zahir Raihan Chalachitra Sangsad, Bulbul Lalitakala Academy, Central Khelaghara Asar, and Bangladesh Students' Union, among others.



LAW OPINION

New data laws in Bangladesh: A CRITIQUE

SAJID HOSSAIN

Bangladesh has entered a new phase in its digital governance story with two Ordinances, namely, The Personal Data Protection Ordinance 2025 (PDPO) and the National Data Management Ordinance 2025 (NDMO). Their appearance, almost devoid of public discussion, invites reflection: are we witnessing the long-delayed codification of digital rights, or the rise of a data-centric State?

Firstly, section 3 of the NDMO declares that its provisions shall take precedence over any other law, contract or instrument in matters relating to the collection, storage, processing, security and identification of persons of personal data, and the overall management and interoperability of national data. In one sweep, the NDMO asserts primacy across virtually the entire domain of data governance. Contrast this with Europe, where the *General Data Protection Regulation* (GDPR) operates under the Charter of Fundamental Rights, which enshrines respect for private life and protection of personal data as fundamental rights. The Court of Justice of the European Union (CJEU) has struck down legislation that intruded too far into those rights, notably in *Digital Rights Ireland* and *Tele2 Sverige AB*.

In the European model, secondary legislation bends to rights; in ours, the NDMO begins with a supremacy clause.

Institutional design reinforces that contrast. Under section 8(2) of the NDMO, the National Data Management Authority is established as a statutory body attached to the Prime Minister's Office. Under section 23, it designs and operates the nation's data architecture, including digital interoperability systems and an identity layer linking core registers, and also enforces compliance and imposes administrative penalties under sections 42-45. Under the GDPR, by comparison, Member States must create independent supervisory authorities that act "with complete independence" in monitoring the law's application. In *Commission v Germany* (ECJ C 518/07) and *Commission v Hungary* (C-288/12), the CJEU held that such authorities must act with complete independence from any external influence, including direct or indirect influence of the State. Bangladesh's new Authority, however, sits within the executive branch. It is simultaneously an

architect, operator and enforcer, effectively acting as the referee and a player at once.

Perhaps the most ambitious feature lies in the identity layer mandated by section 23 of the NDMO and its Schedule. This unified system is designed to connect a citizen's National ID, passport, tax identification number and other key registers. The intended benefits are administrative efficiency and easier access to public services. Yet technical unification also brings constitutional risk. When every register speaks to every other, the State gains the capacity to reconstruct a person's entire life-trajectory – where one lives, travels, works, and interacts online.

Under GDPR Articles 5 and 25, personal data must be collected for specific, explicit and legitimate purposes and be limited to what is necessary. By contrast, the Ordinances contain no explicit, general-purpose duties of purpose-limitation and data-minimisation binding on State processing. What promises frictionless governance could, without constraint, evolve into frictionless surveillance.

Then there is also the question of how these far-reaching measures arrived. Both Ordinances were promulgated under Article 93(l) of the Constitution, authorising the President to issue ordinances when "circumstances exist which render immediate action necessary". Parliament stands dissolved; yet through this route, Bangladesh has now enacted the most comprehensive data-governance regime in its history. A potent query thereby arises: was there truly an extraordinary necessity justifying the use of that power for something this foundational?

A framework that will shape the country's digital constitution deserves the full sunlight of parliamentary debate. The GDPR took years of public consultation and legislative negotiation before it was argued into existence through committees, parliaments and courts – proposed in 2012, adopted in 2016, effective in 2018. Our twin Ordinances arrived in one November gazette by executive fiat. While Ordinances are constitutionally valid, they are simply not constitutionally deliberative. The difference matters when the legislation in question defines the relationship between citizen and State in the digital era.

Furthermore, the Authority's remit effectively makes the Bangladeshi State the most consequential data controller in practice.

Under the NDMO, it manages citizen data life cycles, coordinates integration across ministries and enforces compliance. Section 24(l) of the PDPO creates consent exemptions covering, *inter alia*, national security, crime control, taxation, public interest, and public health emergencies. Though sections 24(2) and (4)-(6) limit pure blanket use, their sheer scope risks leaving much state data processing subject to internal rather than independent oversight.

However, for instance, when a private bank mishandles data, the Authority may sanction it. But when a ministry misuses citizen data, will an Authority seated in the Prime Minister's Office do the same? The combination of broad statutory exemptions and executive-controlled enforcement produces a paradox: Big Tech may now face tighter rules, but Big State remains largely self-regulated. This is not to deny the potential gains of improved service delivery and data localisation. But these are infrastructural advantages, not rights guarantees. The Ordinances give citizens the right to access their data, but not always the right to refuse its use.

However, several correctives are still possible. The Authority's independence should be entrenched in statute, modelled on GDPR-style safeguards. Purpose-limitation and data-minimisation rules should bind state agencies as firmly as they bind private controllers, and the Ordinances should advance to Parliament as full Acts preceded by consultation with technologists, civil society and the legal community. A modern data-protection framework should operationalise privacy as a core civil right, not subordinate it to infrastructural convenience.

Bangladesh now stands at a crossroads. We can treat these Ordinances as the culmination of our digital-governance journey, or as its beginning – a chance to craft, through public debate, a data regime that protects citizens not only from corporations but from the overreach of the State itself. The difference between a *GDPR moment* and a *data-state moment* lies not in the technology we adopt, but in the constitutional temperament with which we wield it.

The writer is an Advocate specialising in corporate, commercial and technology law.

BRIEF LAW REVIEW

The draft Telecommunication Ordinance 2025

ABRAR BIN SHOUKAT ALVI

For decades, Bangladesh's digital network has operated under the constant threat of arbitrary executive interferences. Access to the internet could be severed without notice or remedy whenever there emerged any political tension within the country.

Importantly, Bangladesh lacked any explicit statutory basis for such interferences. Orders were conveyed orally or through encrypted messages from the National Telecommunication Monitoring Centre (NTMC) to operators, with no publication or review. The result was a legal vacuum, where fundamental rights under the Constitution, of being treated only in accordance with law and the right to free speech, expression could be suspended by administrative discretion alone.

Against that backdrop, the draft Bangladesh Telecommunication (Amendment) Ordinance 2025 presents quite a transformative development. It says that "no telecommunication connection, service or internet access shall be shut down, disrupted or restricted under any circumstances". This mandate, if materialised, will be in line with global jurisprudence on freedom of expression and information protected by Article 19 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR). It will also stand in alignment with Bangladesh with the position of the UN Human Rights Council, which in 2022 reaffirmed that blanket internet shutdowns can never be justified. However, a single prohibitory clause does



not take us far. From a governance perspective, the new ordinance should also introduce institutional safeguards to ensure that the promise of non-interference survives changes in political will. While the draft law has provisions for parliamentary and judicial oversight, there is still room for improvement. First, in line with the EU Digital Services Act 2022, the operators, independent of government regulators, should be made obligated to publish reports detailing any governmental request affecting network operators. This will potentially ensure transparency and accountability in governance and ensure their conformity with the right to information.

Furthermore, an independent digital rights commission to investigate violations, audit state use of digital powers, and provide remedies could also be established. Similar commissions exist under the African Union Model Law on Access to Information (2013). A digital compensation fund should also be formed to provide redress when governmental action or inaction causes any quantifiable loss to businesses. Finally, the draft Ordinance should be harmonised with the data protection laws in order to ensure that the right to connectivity complements the right to privacy under Article 43 of the Constitution.

Internationally, Bangladesh has often been cited by Access Now and Article 19 for its opaque handling of digital governance. With the new ordinance being passed and implemented, the country could potentially transform from a case study in digital authoritarianism into a regional model of digital democracy.

The writer is student of law at Bangladesh University of Professionals.

JUDGMENT REVIEW

Consultation with the Chief Justice in appointing SC judges

ABUZAR GIFARI

Article 95(l) of the Constitution of Bangladesh mandated the President to consult the Chief Justice (CJ) when appointing Supreme Court (SC) judges. This requirement was removed by the 4th Amendment in 1975 but reinstated by the 15th Amendment in 2011. This issue was first examined in *Bangladesh v Idrisur Rahman*, reported in 29 BLD (AD) 79, also known as the *Ten Judges' case*. The Appellate Division (AD) ruled that consulting the CJ was a necessary "constitutional imperative or convention" for appointing SC judges, even when this requirement was omitted by the 4th Amendment. Evidence shows that all SC judges were appointed after consulting the CJ, except once in 1994, confirming that such consultation has crystallised into a customary practice. The Court also held that considering CJ's opinion with primacy is crucial for judicial independence, a principle enshrined in the rule of law.

As the 8th Amendment case held the rule of law as a basic structure of the constitution,



that in case of conflict, neither opinion had primacy. However, this rule was later overruled in India by the *Advocates on Record Case* (1993), where the CJ's opinion was given primacy. Although the latter

case was also referred to in the *ABM Altaf Hossain* case, reliance was primarily put on the *SP Gupta* case. In my opinion, this can be seen as abusive selective borrowing of a constitutional idea, not justified by

contemporary comparative constitutional law theories.

The Court criticised the *Ten Judges' case* for rendering primacy to the executive through the bifurcated consultation process and aimed to uphold judicial independence. However, in doing so, the Court rather inadvertently strengthened the executive's power over the judiciary. For instance, if the CJ recommends a candidate and the Prime Minister rejects it, the candidate would not be appointed, effectively giving the Prime Minister dominant authority in judicial appointments.

Indeed, the Court did not provide strong legal reasoning for deviating from its precedent. It only cited the absence of "political motivation" in the present case and contrasted it with the *Ten Judges' case*. A well-substantiated justification was required for effecting such significant change in the constitutional jurisprudence.

The writer is Lecturer in the Department of Law and Land Administration, University of Rajshahi.

Star SPORT

DHAKA WEDNESDAY NOVEMBER 19, 2025, AGRAHAYAN 4, 1432 BS

what to WATCH

T SPORTS
Bangladesh vs
Ireland
2nd Test, Day 1
Live from 9:30 am
Women's Kabaddi
World Cup

Live from 7:30 pm
Asia Cup Rising
Stars
Bangladesh A vs Sri
Lanka A
**SONY SPORTS 1
AND 2**

World Cup Qualifiers
Live from 7:00 am
Sony Sports 5
New Zealand vs
West Indies
2nd ODI
Live from 7:00 am

All eyes on Mushy, but Ireland hope to spoil party

SPORTS REPORTER

Ahead of Bangladesh's second and final Test against Ireland, beginning today in Mirpur, veteran Mushfiqur Rahim's landmark hundredth Test has taken centre stage, leaving everything else aside.

The veteran is the longest-serving international cricketer currently active and, as Bangladesh play their 156th Test on Wednesday, Mushfiqur reaching the landmark 100 Tests, becoming Bangladesh's first, would be a testament to how essential he has been in the Test circuit over a period of 20 years, holding the baton of Bangladesh's middle order in the toughest format.

A glowing Mushfiqur stepped out from the dressing room yesterday, shaking hands with members of the media before a photoshoot with journalists at the Sher-e-Bangla National Cricket Stadium turf. Some of the members of the media who lined up for a photo opportunity have seen

↗ BCB will mark Mushfiqur's 100th Test match with a 10-minute program after the toss of the second Test, featuring several activities, including the presentation of a special Test cap, a commemorative cap casket, a special crest and an autographed jersey for the 38-year-old batter.

⌚ BCB announced on Tuesday that students and teachers from schools, colleges, universities and madrassas will receive free entry for the second Test.

Mushfiqur from the beginning, some are new, but Mushfiqur's durability has astounded all.

Bangladesh have played very little compared to the big sides in Test cricket, but Mushfiqur's longevity is even more pronounced because of this facet. To put into context, Ian Bell, who was playing just his second Test when Mushfiqur made his debut at Lord's, went on to retire after 118 Tests in 2015.

At yesterday's pre-match presser, Bangladesh head coach Phil Simmons said on Mushfiqur: "I think first of all, we have to acknowledge his professionalism and his longevity and just his desire to play cricket for Bangladesh."

"Because to get 100 Test matches, Bangladesh doesn't play 15 a year, so it's taken him a period of time and we must appreciate that."

Mushfiqur's attention to detail has kept him ahead of the curve, outlasting the other four of the Big Five of Bangladesh cricket.

"At this level, you cannot be stagnant... you have to always try and get better," Simmons said, adding that Mushfiqur has "evolved many times".

Simmons said his simple advice to the veteran has been to enjoy the game. "You need to be enjoying what you're doing... once you're performing, you determine how long you want to play," he told Mushfiqur during the South Africa Test.

Simmons acknowledged that fitness, performance and the "desire to continue" are things Mushfiqur already has; now only he determines when he brings down the curtain. Bangladesh's Test side would certainly hope that time is still far away.

There is a feeling that the Mirpur Test may not proceed for the whole of five days, given Mirpur's spin conductiveness. Simmons said that the wicket appears to be looking good for batting for two to two-and-a-half days. Mushfiqur might be taking note, while Ireland middle-order batter Harry Tector joked there would be "certainly not any freebies".

"I don't think he needs any freebies. He's such a good player," Tector said.

For Ireland, there is an opportunity to spoil the party. "Hope so, yes," head coach Heinrich Malan said.

"We're preparing the same way that we always do... you've heard Harry speak about trying to level the series. We go into it with the same mindset."



MORSALIN ENDS Bangladesh's long wait



Bangladesh fans erupt as Sheikh Morsalin scores in the 11th minute to give the hosts the lead over India in a 2027 AFC Asian Cup Qualifier at the National Stadium in Dhaka yesterday. PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED

SPORTS REPORTER

Sheikh Morsalin ended Bangladesh's long wait for a victory against India with an 11th-minute strike, as the hosts secured their first win of the AFC Asian Cup Qualifiers campaign with a 1-0 triumph in front of a roaring capacity crowd at the National Stadium in Dhaka on Tuesday.

The Bangladesh No. 7 scored his seventh international goal, expertly

threading the ball between the legs of a hesitant Gurpreet Singh Sandhu, following a superb square pass from Rakib Hossain on a quick counter-attack. The goal evoked memories of 22 years ago, when Bangladesh had last defeated India at the same ground, courtesy of a golden goal from Matiur Rahman Munna in a SAFF Championship semifinal.

Despite the early lead, there was plenty of time left on the clock, and with

Bangladesh's history of conceding late goals against India, the home side had little room to relax. Under the watchful eye of Hamza Choudhury, who was influential across the pitch, the home side defended their slim advantage with determination.

Hamza, who scored two breathtaking goals against Nepal last week, came close to doubling the lead just before half-time, sending a powerful left-footed volley

narrowly over the bar in the 43rd minute. India pressed hard in the second half, but their lack of clinical finishing kept the Blue Tigers at bay.

Bangladesh also had to cope with injuries to defenders Tariq Kazi and Zayyan Ahmed, but the team's collective effort -- including defensive contributions from wide forwards Rakib and Faysal Ahmed Fahim -- helped secure a momentous victory.

'Can't make 180 million people happy anywhere else'

ANISUR RAHMAN

Sheikh Morsalin may have delivered the decisive strike against India last night, but it was Hamza Choudhury who anchored Bangladesh's resistance, marshalling the backline and helping end a 22-year winless run against their neighbours.

The Leicester City midfielder credited the team's collective mentality, noting how both he and Shamit Shome had tried to raise the group's standards since joining the squad.

"I feel really very happy because we won. I just joined and Shamit joined late. We just try and add a bit of quality, a bit of mentality. Today we showed we have that mentality," Hamza told reporters in the post-match presser after his side's penultimate fixture of the 2027 AFC Asian Cup Qualifiers.

He reflected on recent matches where Bangladesh dominated possession but faltered late -- leading to elimination before yesterday's match -- and contrasted that with last night's

display: "Today we showed the complete opposite... maybe not so good with the ball, but we showed we can be resilient."

Even without the captain's armband, Hamza was a vocal organiser at the back, guiding the team through India's pressure spells. Asked to place the achievement alongside his English FA Cup win with Leicester City, he replied that the significance was incomparable.

"There are 180 million people that we all make happy today... you can't really compete with that anywhere else. So, yeah, it's definitely right up there."

For Hamza, the fixture carried the weight of a final. "Twenty-three years people wait to qualify

for tournaments or win big games. This is our biggest game," he said.

He admitted the win against India fulfilled a personal ambition too. "You can have more than one dream," he said, adding that he remained confident Bangladesh would one day qualify for a major tournament.

Head coach Javier Cabrera shared the credit widely, choosing not to highlight individuals. Instead, he praised the collective effort from starters to late substitutes.

"It's been everyone... absolutely every single player performed well today," Cabrera said, adding that even for himself, recovering from earlier setbacks had not been easy.



SHORT CORNER

BCB appoints Miraz, Shanto, Saif as format-wise vice-captains

The Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) on Tuesday announced a reshuffle in leadership roles across all three formats, appointing Mehidy Hasan Miraz, Najmul Hossain Shanto, and Saif Hassan as vice-captains of the Test, ODI, and T20I teams, respectively.

Bangladesh women's India tour postponed indefinitely

Bangladesh women's cricket team's scheduled white-ball tour of India in December has been postponed indefinitely; Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) director Abdur Razzak confirmed to The Daily Star yesterday. The Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) informed the BCB of the decision via email. The Tigresses were due to play three ODIs and three T20Is.

Rubaba Dowla named new BCB Women's Wing chairperson

The Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) announced a reshuffle of committee roles on Tuesday, appointing Rubaba Dowla as the new chairperson of its women's wing. She replaces Abdur Razzak, who will continue with the department as vice-chairman. Additionally, Razzak has been appointed chairman of the High Performance unit, succeeding Khaled Mashud Pilot.

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

BPL in limbo over missed bank guarantee

SPORTS REPORTER

Chaos seems to have become synonymous with the Bangladesh Premier League (BPL), and the 12th edition is no exception.

Despite a five-day extension to secure mandatory bank guarantees from all five franchises, the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) remains off track.

On November 13, the BPL governing council extended the deadline for submitting the BDT 10 crore guarantees to November 18 after several teams requested more time.

However, by the final day, only three franchises -- Dhaka Capitals, Rajshahi Warriors and Rangpur Riders -- had

submitted guarantees, with one reportedly depositing less than required.

Chattogram Royals and Sylhet Titans have yet to provide any guarantee.

BPL governing council secretary Iftekhar Rahman Mithu told The Daily Star yesterday that the board might need to extend the deadline again.

"If any franchise fails to provide the bank guarantee, their franchise fee of BDT 2 crore will be forfeited. But proceeding without the guarantee risks repeating past issues. Teams can also submit a Fixed Deposit lien, which we can break at any time," he said.

The players' auction is scheduled for November 23, but further delays in guarantees could postpone it.



Hosts Bangladesh clinched their second straight win in the Women's Kabaddi World Cup, defeating a relatively inexperienced Germany 57-27 at the Shaheed Suhrawardi Indoor Stadium in Mirpur yesterday. They had earlier started their campaign in style on Monday with a 42-22 victory over African champions Uganda.

PHOTO: BKF



BSRM
THE ONLY STEEL FACTORY IN BANGLADESH TO RECEIVE THE
GREEN FACTORY AWARD 2025

SHAH CEMENT

Superbrands
WINNER
4 TIMES

Campaign posters flood the capital

DNCC orders their removal in 7 days

HELEMUL ALAM and SHAHEEN MOLLAH

Posters and flyers of nomination aspirants from political parties have become a nuisance in the capital ahead of the national polls expected in February, violating existing laws.

Campaign materials now cling to almost every surface – utility poles, footbridges, building walls, and metro rail pillars – while slogans and party symbols grow increasingly visible.

On June 19, the Election Commission banned posters during the official campaign period to make the election more environment friendly and disciplined. The campaign period is expected to begin in the first week of next month with the announcement of the election schedule.

Officials and residents say aspirants are exploiting the window before the schedule to display the campaign materials. Most

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Despite the Election Commission banning posters for poll campaigns just a week ago, posters put up by political leaders were still seen across the capital yesterday, including these in the Farmgate area.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

COP30 CLIMATE TALKS Brazil unveils first draft deal

Text leaves open a wide range of possibilities on flashpoint issues

AFP, Belém

COP30 hosts Brazil yesterday produced a first draft of an agreement between nations at the UN climate talks after negotiations on the sticking points stretched late into the night.

The draft includes a sweep of options on the most difficult issues, reflecting the gulf between the nearly 200 nations in Belém and the work still ahead to refine a final compromise.

The nine page "Global Mutirão" document -- a reference to an Indigenous concept of uniting toward a common goal -- came after Brazil on Monday urged delegates to work day and night to produce an agreement by midweek.

The text leaves open a wide range of possibilities on the flashpoint issues in Belém -- trade measures, finance for poorer nations, and the global inadequacy of carbon-cutting goals.

But the quick turnaround of a draft on these thorny points suggested the COP30 presidency was confident it could soon have an outcome, observers said.

"It represents a steady progression from the previous iteration and is likely one of the earliest releases of such a clean text in recent COP history," said Li Shuo, a climate analyst at the Asia Society Policy Institute.

The draft reflects the stark division between a coalition wanting a "roadmap" on a fossil fuel phaseout, and a bloc led by oil-producing countries opposing any such effort.

It proposes an optional "workshop" to discuss "low carbon solutions," or a high-level ministerial roundtable



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Mushfiqur's 100th Test today



STAR REPORT

After several days of build-up, the moment has finally arrived as Bangladesh veteran Mushfiqur Rahim gears up to take the field for his 100th Test in the second match of the two-match series against Ireland at the Sher-e-Bangla National Cricket Stadium in Mirpur today.

The first day's play will begin at 9:30 am (Bangladesh time).

Almost all the buzz surrounding the series has centred on Mushfiqur's milestone, with the 38-year-old set to become the first Bangladeshi to reach the prestigious 100-

SEE PAGE 8 COL 1

Trump's plan for Gaza backed by UNSC

Hamas rejects resolution, saying it imposes int'l guardianship mechanism

AGENCIES

The UN Security Council on Monday voted to adopt a US-drafted resolution endorsing President Donald Trump's plan to end the war in Gaza and authorising an international stabilisation force for the Palestinian enclave.

Israel and the Palestinian group Hamas agreed last month to the first phase of Trump's 20-point plan for Gaza - a ceasefire in their two-year war and a hostage-release deal - but the UN resolution is seen as vital to legitimising a transitional governance body and reassuring countries that are considering sending troops to Gaza.

The text of the resolution says member states can take part in the Trump chaired Board of Peace envisioned as a transitional authority that would oversee reconstruction and economic recovery of Gaza. It also authorises the international stabilisation force, which would ensure a process of demilitarising Gaza, including by decommissioning weapons and destroying military infrastructure.

Hamas, in a statement, reiterated that it will not disarm and argued that its fight against Israel is legitimate resistance, potentially pitting the group against the international force authorised by the resolution, reports Reuters.

"The resolution imposes an international guardianship mechanism on the Gaza Strip, which our people and their factions reject," Hamas said in its statement, issued after the adoption of the resolution.

Palestinian Foreign Minister Varzen

UN vote is 'first step towards peace': Palestinian FM

Israel says US plan for Gaza to deliver 'peace and prosperity'

Trump celebrates vote as "a moment of true historic proportion"

Russia, China abstain, complain UN lacks role in Gaza plan

Aghabekian Shahin said yesterday the UN Security Council's adoption of the resolution was a necessary first step on a long road toward peace.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's office hailed the US-drafted plan, saying it would lead to "peace and prosperity", reports AFP.

The European Union hailed the vote in favour of US President Donald Trump's Gaza peace plan as "an important step". United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres called the passing of the resolution an important step in the consolidation of the ceasefire, in a statement sent to reporters.

MUSIC, PE TEACHERS
Citizens, cultural groups slam hire plan cancellation

Demand Aug 28 gazette reinstatement

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A total of 80 eminent citizens and 18 cultural organisations have strongly condemned the interim government's decision to scrap the recruitment plan for music and physical education teachers in primary schools, terming the move "regressive".

In a joint statement issued under the banner of Jatiya Shikha O Sangskriti Rakha Andolok (National Movement for Protection of Education and Culture), the signatories alleged that the decision was taken following demands from a group seeking the appointment of religion teachers instead of music teachers, despite religion teachers already being deployed in schools.

The platform stressed that primary education is the foundation of a child's ethical, cultural, and human development, noting that music fosters patriotism and aesthetics, while physical education teaches discipline and teamwork.

It added, "In the digital age, when children are becoming physically and mentally constricted due to screen addiction, music and physical exercise can be the primary tools for developing their creativity and focus."

Highlighting international

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Hasina sentence violates fair trial standards: HRW

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Human Rights Watch has alleged that the death penalty against ousted prime minister Sheikh Hasina followed a process that "failed to meet international fair trial standards".

"There is enduring anger and anguish in Bangladesh over Hasina's repressive rule, but all criminal proceedings need to meet international fair trial standards," said Meenakshi Ganguly, deputy Asia director at Human Rights Watch (HRW).

"Those responsible for horrific abuses under the Hasina administration should be held to account after impartial investigations and credible trials."

The HRW came up with the statement after the International Crimes Tribunal I of Bangladesh on Monday sentenced Hasina and former home minister Asaduzzaman Khan Kamal to death for crimes against humanity during the violent suppression of student-led protests in 2024. Human Rights Watch said today.

The HRW statement said the



Smoke rises from brick kilns in the Bypass Horiyan area of Rajshahi's Pabna. With the rainy season over, brick kilns across the country are back in operation, causing pollution and often contributing to topsoil loss.

PHOTO: AZHAR UDDIN

Khalilur reaches Delhi for regional security conclave

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

National Security Adviser Khalilur Rahman reached New Delhi yesterday, a day earlier than scheduled, to attend a regional security meet at the invitation of his Indian counterpart Ajit Doval.

He will lead the Bangladeshi delegation at the two-day Colombo Security Conclave starting today.

His visit comes as Dhaka-Delhi relations remain strained, with Bangladesh calling upon India to extradite deposed prime minister Sheikh Hasina and former home minister Asaduzzaman Khan Kamal after the International Crimes Tribunal handed them death sentences for crimes against humanity committed during last year's uprising.

They have been living in India since the fall of the Awami League government on August 5 last year. India has not responded to Bangladesh's earlier call for Hasina's extradition.

"I do not want to interfere with the agenda that he [Khalil] has," Foreign Adviser Touhid Hossain said when

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