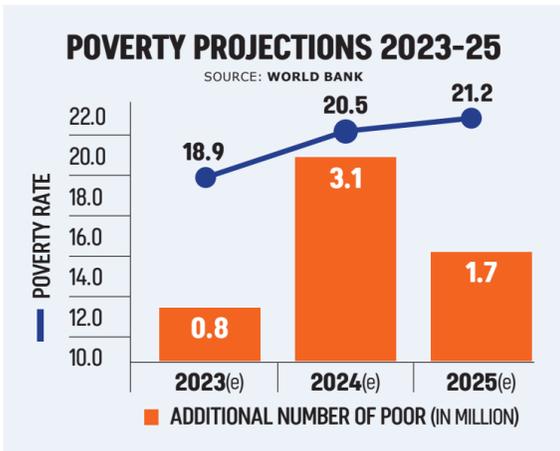




Poverty swells as economic downturn bites

World Bank says an estimated 2 million people slipped into poverty this year



STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Nearly two million people are estimated to have fallen into poverty in 2025 as Bangladesh grapples with an economic downturn almost comparable to the Covid-19 pandemic period, according to a new World Bank report published yesterday.

Macroeconomic conditions have deteriorated significantly since 2023, with GDP growth slowing from 6 percent to an estimated 4 percent this year.

Consequently, the national poverty rate is projected to rise to 21.2 percent in 2025 from 20.5 percent a year earlier. This follows a slide of more than three million people into poverty in 2024, signalling that the economy is losing its ability to shield vulnerable populations from shocks.

The report, "Bangladesh Poverty and Equity Assessment", lays bare the country's broader economic vulnerabilities. It also warns of widening inequality, whether measured by the Gini coefficient or the prosperity gap.

"Poverty and inequality are both projected to worsen in the wake of recent income losses," the World Bank said.

The trend reflects a shift that began several years ago, as Bangladesh's growth became less inclusive and its ability to convert expansion into poverty reduction weakened.

Between 2010 and 2022, Bangladesh's economic growth proved far less effective at alleviating poverty than that of its neighbours. The country's poverty-reduction elasticity, which measures the decline in poverty for every percentage point of economic growth, stood at just 0.9, lagging significantly behind the South Asian average of 1.5.

High vulnerability to shocks has fuelled rising poverty amid elevated

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1



Plumes of smoke rise over the Korail slum after a massive fire broke out at the densely populated settlement in the capital's Mohakhali yesterday evening.

PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

Fire ravages Korail slum, hundreds of homes burnt

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A massive fire tore through the Bou Bazar area of the capital's Korail slum yesterday evening, reducing hundreds of homes to ashes.

The fire broke out around 5:20pm, and 19 units of the fire service rushed to

SEE PAGE 2 COL 4



17 highly harmful pesticides widely used across country



PINAKI ROY

At least 17 active pesticide ingredients, identified as highly unsafe worldwide, are being used in Bangladesh, posing serious risks to public health and the environment, a new study has found.

These chemicals have been categorised as Highly Hazardous Pesticides (HHPs) by the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) and the World Health Organisation (WHO), as they

73% of tested vegetables exceeded safe pesticide residue limits

Pesticide use has risen to 40,832 tonnes, up from 38,648 tonnes in a year

Govt yet to enforce an HC order to phase out harmful pesticides

"present particularly high levels of acute or chronic hazards" to health and the environment.

In a recent study, 25 HHPs were identified as registered in Bangladesh.

Farmers, pesticide dealers and officials of the Department of Agricultural Extension (DAE) confirmed the market presence and use of the 17 HHPs under various brands registered with the Plant Protection Wing of DAE.

Of them, six are insecticides; five fungicides;

SEE PAGE 2 COL 4

Pay hike for civil servants on way after a decade

Budget tweaks to make room for basic salary hike from Jan

REJAUL KARIM BYRON

Government officials are on course for a pay hike after a decade but at the cost of lower development spending.

The government plans to revise down the development spending by Tk 30,000 crore this fiscal year and raise the non-development expenditure by Tk 28,000 crore, The Daily Star has learnt from people involved with the proceedings.

The increase in non-development expenditure is to accommodate the Pay Commission 2025, The Daily Star has learnt from people involved with the proceedings.

The interim government wants to implement a portion of the recommendations made by the commission during its tenure.

It at least wants to increase the basic salary effective from January next year, they said.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

832 bhoori gold recovered from Hasina's vaults

Say NBR officials

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Central Intelligence Cell of the National Board of Revenue has recovered 832.51 bhoori gold ornaments from two vaults registered under the name of ousted prime minister Sheikh Hasina at Agrani Bank's principal branch in Motijheel.

CIC officials said the vaults, numbered 751 and 753, were opened on Monday in line with Bangladesh Bank regulations. A joint team comprising CIC personnel and representatives from other relevant agencies opened the vaults.

Two CIC sources have independently confirmed that 832.51 bhoori gold ornaments have been found along with state awards and gifts received from various countries and institutions.

Gifts that should have been deposited with the State Treasury were also found in the vaults, they added.

The Anti-Corruption Commission is expected to hold a briefing on the matter soon. Another vault registered in Hasina's name was opened the same day at Pubali Bank, but officials said no assets were found there. The development comes amid ongoing scrutiny of financial records linked to political figures.



Police charge truncheons on candidates of the 47th BCS exams as they demonstrate to demand postponement of their written test. The photo was taken yesterday afternoon in the capital's Shahbagh.

PHOTO: STAR

HSIA CARGO BLAZE CAAB ignored the fire risks for years Finds govt probe

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Civil Aviation Authority of Bangladesh (CAAB) failed to build the capacity needed to prevent or fight fires at Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport, despite seven major incidents since 2013, a probe committee has found.

It also notes that a 2021

recommendation to shift dangerous goods warehouses was never implemented -- long-standing weaknesses that left the airport unable to prevent or contain the blaze that tore through the import cargo complex on October 18.

These findings appeared in the investigation report submitted yesterday to Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus by the 12-member core committee led by the home ministry's senior secretary.

SEE PAGE 8 COL 4

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China launches Shenzhou-22 early for stranded space station crew

AFP, Beijing

China conducted an urgent unmanned spacecraft launch yesterday, after damage to a previous mission's return capsule left the crew on its space station without a means of getting back to Earth.

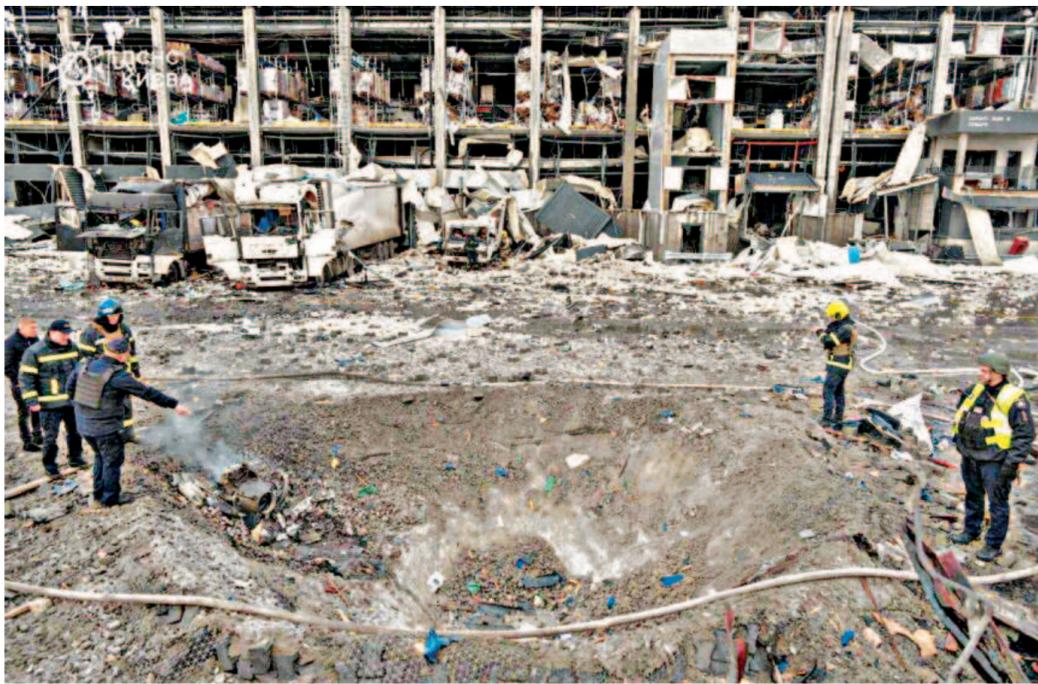
The Long March 2F rocket carrying Shenzhou-22 lifted off shortly after midday from the Jiuquan Satellite Launch Centre in northwest China, footage from state broadcaster CCTV showed.

Recent Shenzhou missions have been used to crew China's Tiangong space station, exchanging teams of three astronauts every six months.

Shenzhou-22 was originally slated for a crewed launch in 2026.

But it was launched early after a suspected space debris strike to the Shenzhou-20 return capsule made it unsafe for re-entry to Earth, leaving its crew briefly stranded.

The Shenzhou-20 team returned aboard Shenzhou-21 on November 14 — nine days later than planned — leaving their relief crew without a reliable return vehicle.



Police officers and rescuers inspect a crater left by a Russian missile strike at a supermarket warehouse compound in Kyiv, Ukraine, yesterday.

PHOTO: REUTERS

Tulip's trial 'unfair and contrived'

Top UK lawyers write to Bangladesh high commission

STAR DESK

Leading British lawyers, including a former Conservative justice secretary, have described the trial in Bangladesh of former UK city minister Tulip Siddiq as "contrived and unfair."



They made the statement in a letter to Bangladesh's ambassador to the UK ahead of the verdict, according to The Guardian.

Siddiq, who resigned from the UK government in January, is due to receive her verdict and sentence in absentia, with the prosecution seeking a maximum life sentence term, on December 1.

The Labour MP for Hampstead and Highgate is the niece of deposed Bangladeshi prime minister Sheikh Hasina, who was handed a death sentence last week over charges of crimes against humanity during last year's crackdown on student-led protests.

Published yesterday, the Guardian report said that a group of high-profile lawyers, including Robert Buckland KC, who served as justice secretary under Boris Johnson, and former Tory attorney general Dominic Grieve, wrote to Abida Islam, Bangladesh high commissioner in the UK.

They said Siddiq has been denied basic rights

SEE PAGE 5 COL 1

Pay hike for civil servants

FROM PAGE 1

Contacted, Finance Adviser Salehuddin Ahmed said he would try to introduce the Pay Commission 2025 partially during his term.

"Full implementation will take a long time. But we will take a call on this once we get the final report from the pay commission. We can't say anything on this matter before January."

The commission is calculating the pay hike keeping in mind the cost and standard of living.

Once the full report is received, the recommendations will be assessed with the hikes extended to judicial and defence services.

"But it is true that a large portion of the increase in next fiscal year's budget would go towards implementing the new pay scale," Ahmed added.

On November 10, the Coordination Council on Budget and Macroeconomic Review planned a Tk 883,000 crore budget for next fiscal year, an increase of Tk 93,000 crore year-on-year.

Ahmed, however, clarified that the pay scale is not the only reason for the upward revision of the non-development budget in fiscal 2025-26.

The 10 percent and 5 percent special allowances extended after the budget announcement in June will have to be accommodated, he said.

However, the revised budget for this fiscal year and next year's budget will be finalised in April next year by the elected government, according to finance ministry officials.

The interim government formed the Pay Commission in July to be led by former Finance Secretary Zakir Ahmed Khan.

The commission may submit its

report to the government in the first week of December, The Daily Star has learnt from people with direct knowledge of the matter.

The new pay scale will try to ensure that the civil servants' real salaries do not fall below the 2015 level.

Besides, the government's revenue collection situation and capacity will be taken into consideration such that the new pay scale do not put cause extreme fiscal strain.

The government has taken a host of initiatives to boost revenue collection, Ahmed said.

"This will be done by increasing compliance and not by raising the tax

rose to Tk 50,775 crore the following year.

This fiscal year, the allocation for the overhead is Tk 84,114 crore. In addition, Tk 35,657 crore has been allocated for pensions and gratuities for retirees.

Meanwhile, at the Coordination Council meeting, this fiscal year's budget was trimmed by Tk 2,000 crore to Tk 788,000 crore.

However, the size of the annual development programme (ADP) was reduced by Tk 30,000 crore to Tk 200,000 crore, while the revenue budget was increased by Tk 28,000 crore to Tk 588,000 crore.

BUDGET IN NUMBERS in crore taka	SOURCE: FINANCE DIVISION		
	2025-26 ORIGINAL	2025-26 REVISED	2026-27 ESTIMATED
Total expenditure	790,000	788,000	883,000
Revenue budget	560,000	588,000	630,000
ADP	230,000	200,000	253,000

rates."

Besides, economic activities have picked up after the announcement of the election in February.

"Investor confidence has picked up, so investment will increase and with it, revenue collection," he said.

The last pay scale was implemented in 2015 in two phases: basic salary from July 1, 2015 and allowances from July 1 the following year.

In fiscal 2014-15, the allocation for salaries and allowances was Tk 28,709 crore. And after implementing the new pay and allowances, the allocation

Regarding the reduction in ADP allocation, Ahmed said that the progress of implementing the development budget has been slow.

"In addition, we are following very strict policies in expenditure. Purchases for projects are being carefully scrutinised. For these reasons, implementation is low," he said.

In the upcoming fiscal year's budget, ADP allocation has been set at Tk 253,000 crore and non-development budget at Tk 630,000 crore.

Poverty swells as economic downturn bites

FROM PAGE 1

inflation and job losses from 2022 to 2025. The report notes that 62 million people remain just above the poverty line with "unstable consumption, limited savings, and inadequate social protection." These households, it says, were disproportionately exposed to the combined pressures of inflation, shrinking real incomes, and a weakening labour market.

Labour incomes also softened as job creation slowed and real earnings for less-skilled workers stagnated. Employment fell by nearly two million between 2023 and 2024, with a further loss of 800,000 jobs expected in 2025. Women and young people were the hardest hit.

"A business-as-usual approach will not accelerate poverty reduction. The fastest path to reducing poverty and ensuring dignity is through job creation, particularly for youth, women, and vulnerable populations," said Jean Pesme, World Bank Division director for Bangladesh and Bhutan.

The downturn compounds a structural shift already underway since 2016. While rural areas drove poverty reduction between 2016 and 2022, aided by expanding agricultural employment, urban poverty declined more slowly, and job quality deteriorated. Rural poverty fell by 8.5 percentage points during the period, compared with 4.6 points in urban areas, narrowing the rural-urban gap significantly.

But the transformation was not wholly positive: job creation increasingly moved into lower-productivity sectors, and the contribution of labour income to poverty reduction plunged from 89 percent in 2010-2016 to 51 percent in

2016-2022.

LABOUR MARKET

Despite withdrawing from the labour market, more young women are pursuing education. Between 2016 and 2022, the share of females aged 15 to 29 engaged in education rose from 27.3 percent to 31.6 percent. Yet enrolment among young poor females grew more slowly than the national average, widening the education gender gap from 10.6 percent in 2016 to 14.4 percent in 2022 for females aged 15 to 24.

Investing in education has not necessarily translated into urban job opportunities. Low national urban unemployment rates mask the deep struggles young, educated cohorts face in securing work, according to the report.

"We have a paradox that education is not being translated into human capital," said Hossain Zillur Rahman, executive chairman of the Power and Participation Research Centre, speaking as chief guest at the launch. "Unless we solve this core paradox, any '10,000 jobs programme' will merely reinforce inefficiency. We must assess why education is not being converted into productivity."

Even as the national unemployment rate declined between 2016 and 2022, nearly one-fifth of young women remained unemployed, while unemployment among young men rose by 2.5 percentage points.

"This is partly explained by the mismatch between the skills provided by the education system and the needs of the job market," the World Bank said.

"If we truly want to raise productivity and create jobs, our

domestic market will not suffice. Bangladesh must pursue deeper regional cooperation — in trade, investment, and connectivity," said Prof Mustafizur Rahman, distinguished fellow at the Centre for Policy Dialogue.

Weakening job prospects have also pushed many discouraged workers — especially women — out of the labour force altogether. Labour force participation fell from 60.9 percent to 58.9 percent between 2023 and 2024, adding three million working-age people to the ranks of the inactive — 2.4 million of them women.

This decline follows patterns highlighted earlier in the report: while rural labour force participation rose from 59.1 percent to 65.4 percent between 2010 and 2022, urban participation fell from 56.4 percent to 51.1 percent, despite stronger employer demand and higher wages in cities.

"In rural areas, a significant proportion of women often work as unpaid family labourers or in very specific kinds of informal jobs," said Prof Sayema Haque Bidisha, pro-vice chancellor of Dhaka University. "The quality of jobs is more important than employment elasticity."

AK Enamul Haque, director general of the Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies, stressed the need for an investment-friendly environment, noting that job creation is closely tied to the health of the banking sector. "The state of the banking sector is crucial for promoting economic growth. Public investment is also essential to reduce poverty, particularly by linking rural areas with urban centres," he said.

17 highly harmful pesticides

FROM PAGE 1

four herbicides (used to kill unwanted plants); and two rodenticides, according to the study funded by the Global Environment Facility, which provides grants and policy support to developing countries to protect the environment.

The study examined 343 active pesticide ingredients as per the eight global criteria set by the Joint Meeting on Pesticide Management of FAO and WHO.

"Any pesticide that can cause serious or permanent harm to people or the environment is considered highly hazardous," said entomologist Gopal Das, who led the study with technical support from FAO Bangladesh.

Ten of the 17 HHPs are used widely across Bangladesh. They are Paraquat, Glyphosate, Chlorpyrifos, Abamectin, Acetochlor, Glufosinate Ammonium, Zinc Phosphide, Bromadiolone, Carbenazim, and Propiconazole.

The remaining seven HHPs are used either moderately or infrequently. They are Cadusafos, Thiacloprid, Spirodiclofen, Dimethomorph, Beta-cyfluthrin, Cyproconazole, and Edifenphos.

Experts said several of these pesticides are linked to cancer and long-term health effects, while some are highly toxic to aquatic species, birds, and pollinators such as honeybees.

The seven-member team from Bangladesh Agricultural University (BAU) in Mymensingh and Sylhet Agricultural University, which conducted the study, identified eight more HHPs that are registered with the Plant Protection Wing of DAE.

However, it found no trace of the pesticides at dealers' shops or in crop fields during the survey between December 2023 and August 2025.

The eight HHPs are Ethoprophos, Cyfluthrin, Triazophos, Methyl Bromide, Trichlorfon, Diuron, Epoxiconazole, and Flusilazole.

Currently, more than 8,000 pesticide products are registered with the Wing.

One of the HHPs, Paraquat, is commonly used by farmers in Bangladesh though it is banned in more than 40 countries, including 27 member states of the European Union.

"This pesticide ingredient poses serious health risks. If farmers are exposed to the chemical, it could affect their lungs and kidneys," said Gopal Das, a professor of entomology at BAU.

Another herbicide, Glyphosate, causes serious damage to soil.

Once the chemical is applied to plants, it seeps into the soil, mixes with soil nutrients and makes its way into the crop.

"In Bangladesh, Glyphosate is permitted for use in rubber and tea gardens. But farmers all over the country use it on other crops as well," he said.

On January 2, 2020, Bangladesh Environmental Lawyers Association

(BELA) filed a writ petition with the High Court, seeking a ban on Glyphosate.

Three days later, the HC ordered the government to formulate an action plan within 90 days to phase out harmful pesticides, including Glyphosate, and introduce safe alternatives.

However, the government has yet to make any move.

When contacted, Muhammad Shah Alam, deputy director (pesticide) of the Plant Protection Wing, said that in December last year, they decided not to register any products containing Paraquat and Glyphosate. Currently, 187 products composed mainly of these two ingredients are available on the market.

He further said 19 active pesticide ingredients have been banned since 1960 due to their harmful effects.

Asked whether Paraquat, Glyphosate and other HHPs would be banned, he said their fate would be decided in the next meeting of the Pesticide Technical Advisory Committee under the Wing. He, however, could not provide any date.

Data from Bangladesh Crop Protection Association (BCPA) show a steady rise in both pesticide use and the number of manufacturers.

For crop pest control, farmers across the country used at least 40,832 tonnes of pesticides last year compared to 38,648 tonnes in 2023.

The number of pesticide companies in Bangladesh has risen to 900 from 124 in 2010, according to the data.

"The more the number of companies grows, the harder it will be for the authorities to regulate them. This must be addressed immediately," said Gopal Das.

PESTICIDE USE IN VEGETABLE

According to a 2023 review report, 77 percent of farmers in the country used pesticides on vegetables. Of them, 87 percent sprayed pesticides with little or no care, and 92 percent didn't take precautionary measures during use, storage, or transportation.

Of those who used pesticides, 37 percent sprayed vegetables with the chemicals once, 31 percent did so twice, and the rest multiple times. Some even used pesticides 17 to 150 times on a single crop throughout a growing cycle.

Tests on 1,577 winter vegetables revealed that 30 percent of the samples were contaminated and 73 percent exceeded the maximum residue limit of 0.05mg per kg, said the report prepared by four faculties from BAU and a physician from Mymensingh Medical College.

Pesticide contamination was detected in all the gourds tested; 92 percent of beans; 78 percent of tomatoes; 73 percent of eggplants; 62 percent of cabbages and 50 percent of cabbages and cauliflowers.

TOLL ON HEALTH, ENVIRONMENT

Improper use and exposure to pesticides may lead to cancer and health

complications, according to experts.

Nearly 35 percent of farmers in Bangladesh experience acute symptoms such as nausea, headaches, and respiratory distress due to pesticide exposure, said a review published by the International Journal of Research and Scientific Innovation (IJRSI) in March this year, 2025.

Abul Hasnat, associate professor at the National Institute of Cardiovascular Diseases, said that if farmers inhale pesticides while spraying or come into contact with them, they may immediately suffer from nausea, headaches, respiratory problems or eye irritation.

"If anyone consumes food contaminated with pesticides over a long period, the person may develop cancer, neurological disorders and liver diseases depending on the types and amounts of pesticides," he said.

A study published recently by a group of hematologists found that at least 150 of 430 patients, admitted to seven cancer hospitals in Dhaka between July 2017 and June 2018, used pesticides in crop fields.

"Many of our patients are farmers with a history of pesticide use... But not everyone who uses pesticides will inevitably develop cancer. It largely depends on the physical condition of the individual who uses them," said Amin Lutful Kabir, a cancer specialist, who led the study.

This correspondent talked to a farmer, Md Mukter Uddin from Kishoreganj, who has been diagnosed with cancer.

"I have been spraying pesticides on my crop fields for many years," said the 65-year-old, who began farming in his childhood.

Asked whether he wore a mask while spraying pesticides, Mukter said he always wrapped a piece of cloth around his face for protection.

WHAT EXPERTS SAY

Experts and activists call for urgent action to restrict or ban these hazardous pesticides to safeguard public health and protect biodiversity.

Gopal Das said the government has to adopt both short and long-term approaches to phase out the HHPs from the market.

"They [the government] cannot simply ban all these ingredients overnight. They must find alternatives to those pesticides and then proceed with the ban. Otherwise, it will affect food security," he added.

Noting the absence of regulation or control mechanisms for pesticides purchase and use, he said, "A farmer can purchase and use any quantity of pesticide he wants."

DAE should strengthen field-level monitoring and arrange training programmes to teach farmers how to use pesticides safely, he added.

Fire ravages Korail slum

FROM PAGE 1

the spot. After five hours, firefighters brought the blaze under control around 10:30pm. No casualties were reported as of the filing of this report.

Speaking to reporters around midnight, Fire Service Director (Operation and Maintenance) Lt Col Tajul Islam Chowdhury said about 1,500 homes were damaged. "Fully extinguishing the flames would take more time."

He said heavy traffic delayed the arrival of the first fire engines by 30-35 minutes, causing the fire to spread.

"Once there, fire engines could not enter the slum through the narrow alleys, forcing the crew to lay long hose lines."

The cause of the fire could not be determined immediately.

During a visit to the slum around 7:30pm, the reporter found the 90-acre slum plunged into darkness

due to a power outage. As many as 200-250 houses had already been gutted, with flames raging through the Cumilla Potti, Barishal Potti and "K" Block sections of Bou Bazar.

Firefighters, along with locals, were working to contain the blaze.

Crowds were seen running in panic, some trying to save their belongings, others using the tubewell water to douse the blaze.

"Where are you? Everything I own is burning. Please help me," Md Masud, 25, was heard saying over the phone.

A cleaner by profession, he was at work in Banani when the fire started. His wife, Mahiron, a housewife, was also away. When he rushed back to his home, he found it in flames and later called relatives for help.

Masud and his wife, from Sherpur, have lived in Korail with their seven-year-old daughter for years.

"By working at others' homes, they had managed to furnish their

house with a bed, a fridge and some jewellery — but everything was gone in the blink of an eye," said Masud's sister Maleka Begum.

Another resident Aklima Khatun said, "I could not take anything. I bought everything with so much struggle, and now it is all gone?"

Lovely Begum, a resident of the slum for seven years, said, "Everything I own is gone. I bought a TV, fridge and furniture on instalments. The fire burnt."

Many stood in tears as their possessions turned to ashes.

Firefighters said as supply exhausted, water pumps were set up at the adjacent canal. Three generators were placed at the canal's edge to power the pumps.

Meanwhile, Chief Adviser Professor Muhammad Yunus conveyed his heartfelt condolences to the affected families and wished a speedy recovery for those injured.

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Bangladesh is now moving forward on the path to democracy. We are hopeful that the election will be held in early or mid-February 2026 without any hassle. Most political parties have declared their candidates. The election atmosphere has already started across the country.

MIRZA FAKHRUL ISLAM ALAMGIR
BNP Secretary General



People wait in front of an OMS truck to buy rice and other essentials at subsidised rates on Ring Road near Shyamoly in Dhaka. Many had been waiting for more than three hours for the vehicle to arrive. Amid rising living costs, such services remain a lifeline for low-income families. The photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

Will disclose names if anyone pressurises us
Says ACC chief

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Anti-Corruption Commission Chairman Mohammad Abdul Momen yesterday warned that the names of anyone attempting to influence or obstruct corruption investigations will be made public.

Responding to a question about whether the ACC faces undue pressure, Momen said, “If anyone tries to apply undue pressure on the ACC in the future, we will reveal their names.”

He made the remarks at a views-exchange meeting at the ACC headquarters in Dhaka’s Segunbagicha, marking the commission’s founding anniversary.

He stressed that the commission must protect its independence and prevent external interference. “We have many limitations, and we are trying to overcome them,” he added.

Regarding action against politicians, the ACC chief

SEE PAGE 9 COL 3

Living on the edge

How neglect putting thousands of students living in DU dormitories at risk

MAHATHIR MOHAMMED

For years, experts have warned about the vulnerable condition of Dhaka University’s residential halls, but those warnings have gone unaddressed.

Since 2008, multiple expert teams have inspected the old buildings and recommended comprehensive repairs. However, only emergency fixes were carried out, The Daily Star has found.

As a result, thousands of students have long lived in fear of a potential disaster, officials said.

Friday’s earthquake intensified those concerns as fresh cracks appeared in buildings of at least 12 dormitories. Plasters also peeled off in many areas, according to hall union representatives.

The 5.7 magnitude quake left at least 10 students injured in four halls. In response, the university authorities announced a two-week vacation to repair the dormitories.

University engineers confirmed that Sir Salimullah Muslim Hall is currently at the highest risk,

followed by Haji Muhammad Mohsin Hall, Dr Muhammad Shahidullah Hall, Shahid Sergeant

Zahurul Huq Hall, Surja Sen Hall, and Shamsunnahar Hall.

They said a Buet team inspected Mohsin Hall in 2008, and another team reviewed Mohsin, Zahurul Huq, Surja Sen, and Shahidullah halls in 2014.

DU engineer Md Moin Uddin said the experts had recommended

has been made yet,” he said.

Engineers blamed chronic underfunding for the lack of regular maintenance.

“The government allocates money for development, but not for maintenance. It has become a tradition,” said Meraj.

He said if the halls and other



University engineers confirmed that Sir Salimullah Muslim Hall is currently at the highest risk, followed by Haji Muhammad Mohsin Hall, Dr Muhammad Shahidullah Hall, Shahid Sergeant Zahurul Huq Hall, Surja Sen Hall, and Shamsunnahar Hall.

major overhauls for Mohsin Hall and Surja Sen Hall. However, only partial strengthening of the footings and beams was completed. Both halls have now developed fresh cracks.

Another DU engineer, Md Meraj Uddin, said a Buet team inspected Sir Salimullah Muslim Hall in 2021 and recommended evacuation for major repairs. “But no progress

academic and administrative buildings were maintained regularly, the situation would have been better.

Acting Chief Engineer Kazi Md Akram said all old DU buildings require regular maintenance, but due to a low budget, only emergency work is done.

He said the expert teams’ full

SEE PAGE 9 COL 4

NOISE POLLUTION
Now traffic police can fine offenders

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

To curb noise pollution, traffic police will now be authorised to fine offenders — a power previously held only by magistrates.

Under the Noise Pollution (Control) Rules, 2025, issued Monday by the environment ministry, traffic police officers of at least sergeant rank can impose on-the-spot fines for illegal horns, loud sound systems, and other noise violations.

Officials say this added enforcement authority will strengthen monitoring on the ground, which had long been hindered by manpower limitations.

The new rules replace the Noise Pollution (Control) Rules, 2006, which officials described as outdated and lacking clarity on several regulatory issues.

The updated 2025 rules aim to address those gaps by reflecting current needs, practical realities, and technological changes.

SEE PAGE 9

Enforce existing laws to curb digital violence against women

Say speakers during launch of 16 Days of Activism

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Although Bangladesh has strong laws to combat cybercrime, weak enforcement is allowing offenders to act with increasing impunity, said Sharmeen S Murshid, adviser to the Ministry of Women and Children Affairs.

She said various initiatives were underway, but preventing cyber violence is not the responsibility of any one ministry. It requires coordinated action from all relevant state agencies.

Before, a girl couldn’t go out on the street without thinking of eve teasing; now you cannot enter your cyberspace without being stalked. Technology will keep moving, but our attitude will determine its course.

Sharmeen S Murshid
Women and Children Affairs Adviser

Digital violence knows no borders, with 16 and 58 percent of women and girls worldwide facing online abuse. Such violence often spills into offline spaces and restricts women’s participation in public life.

Gitanjali Singh
UN Women Representative

Whenever girls feel unsafe, they should seek assistance from law enforcement and pursue legal action if necessary, she said, adding, “Victims may also inform the ministry, whose quick response team will reach them within 24 hours.”

The adviser made the remarks at the launch of the 2025 global 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence, jointly organised by the ministry, the Local Consultative Group on Women’s Advancement and Gender Equality, and the UN at the Bangladesh China Friendship Conference Centre in Dhaka.

This year’s theme is “UNITE to End Digital Violence Against All Women and Girls”.

Highlighting the gravity of the issue, she said, “Before, a girl couldn’t go out on the street without thinking of eve teasing; now you cannot enter your cyberspace without being stalked. And the stalking world has become huge... It’s not just a boy from a neighbourhood — it’s anybody anywhere in the world. Technology will

SEE PAGE 9 COL 6



A woman carrying her child walks along the narrow edge of a footpath where drainage work is underway. With the area dug up and left unprotected, pedestrians are forced to navigate the risky spot at the edge of the road. The photo was taken in the Lakshmi Bazar area of the capital recently.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

POLLS MONITORING
Don’t appoint politically-linked people
CEC tells local observers

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Chief Election Commissioner AMM Nasir Uddin yesterday directed local election observer organisations not to appoint anyone with political links to monitor the upcoming national election.

The Election Commission sat with 81 organisations at its office as part of a dialogue ahead of the upcoming 13th parliamentary election.

The CEC reiterated that journalists and observers act as the commission’s “CCTV cameras,” ensuring accountability and transparency throughout the process.

CEC Nasir also instructed the organisations to provide proper training on election laws, rules, regulations, and other relevant issues to those who will monitor the polls on the ground.

SEE PAGE 9 COL 1



BANGLADESH UNIVERSITY

৩য় জন্মবার্ষিকী ২০২৬

বাংলাদেশ ইউনিভার্সিটি

January 18, 2026

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This is all that remains of the 500-year-old Nashrat Shah Dighi, locally known as Boro Dighi, in Hathazari, Chattogram. Structures built on the banks and dried portions have shrunk the Sultanate-era reservoir to a small pond, threatening a heritage site once dug as a lifeline for local communities. Bottom, a signboard describing the history of the waterbody.

PHOTO: RAJIB RAIHAN

NASHRAT SHAH DIGHI

Once a vast reservoir, now trapped in concrete

SIFAYET ULLAH, Ctg

The Nashrat Shah Dighi in Chattogram's Hathazari upazila, a Sultanate-era reservoir dug in 1519, is on the verge of disappearing due to rampant grabbing.

Locally known as Boro Dighi, the waterbody once served as a vital source of drinking water for surrounding communities.

Over the years, at least 20 to 25 residential and commercial structures have been built by filling portions of the reservoir. Semi-pucca houses, makeshift structures, and small shops now occupy much of what remains.

Unchecked construction has turned the historic dighi into a dense settlement, erasing its significance and posing risks to a crucial natural water source.

During a visit, this correspondent observed that while some water remains at the centre, the area has been divided for fish farming. On dried-up portions along the edges, locals have cultivated vegetables. Most structures have been built

along the reservoir's western and northern sides.

"During my childhood, I remember the dighi was a vast expanse of clear water. Now, the entire western side has been turned into a settlement," said local resident Mohammad Iqbal.



Local trader Mohammad Oman echoed him.

Citing the late historian Shamsul Hossain, who was also a former curator of the Chittagong University Museum, Banglapedia notes that Crown Prince Nashrat Shah, son of Alauddin Husain Shah, excavated the dighi and built a mosque beside it in 1519. Both were named after him.

The reservoir originally spanned

45 acres and is considered one of the major Sultanate era waterbodies excavated in Chattogram.

The Nashrat Shah Mosque, located on the western bank of the dighi near the Oxygen-Hathazari road, no longer retains any Sultanate-era architectural features. It appears entirely modern, but a small glass enclosure inside the compound preserves two pillar fragments reportedly unearthed during reconstruction work in 1988.

"Lack of preservation has already cost the area a valuable piece of Sultanate-era history," said Bangla Academy fellow and Chattogram-based researcher Md Shamsul Haque. He warned that if encroachment continues, the dighi will soon survive only as a name.

Contacted, Abu Isa Anchari, chief city planner of the Chattogram Development Authority, said the dighi has been designated as a "vegetation area" in the new master plan.

"As such, no one will receive approval to construct buildings within its boundaries," he said.

NOAKHALI GOVT COLLEGE

Unsafe buildings leave students, teachers at risk

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Noakhali

The teachers and students of Noakhali Government College are in distress as six of the institution's eight buildings have become dilapidated and hazardous.

Following the 5.7 magnitude earthquake on November 23, student attendance has dropped sharply amid fear that the vulnerable buildings could collapse at any time.

Established on March 1, 1963 and nationalised in 1968, the college spans 20.50 acres and has two campuses. The old campus hosts Higher Secondary courses, while the new campus offers honours, masters and degree pass courses. The college has around 22,000 students.

"After Friday's earthquake, student attendance was low today [Sunday]. We were in panic the entire time while in class because our academic building is vulnerable. Plaster has fallen off from the ceiling in several rooms, exposing rusty rods," said Rasheedul Islam Sohag, a Sociology student.

Taslima Akter of the Botany Department said, "Our science building is extremely hazardous. Plaster often falls onto us. Many classmates did not attend today's class due to fear of collapse after Friday's earthquake."



Principal Prof Zakir Hossain said the Education Engineering Department has identified six out of eight buildings of the college as hazardous. "Students have long been attending classes amid risk. The earthquake on Friday further spread panic among them as well as among the teachers. Class attendance has been very low," he said.

The principal said the old tin-shed building of the higher

secondary section is being replaced with a new structure, but the six dilapidated buildings may collapse at any time or in the event of a stronger earthquake. "These should be demolished and new ones have to be constructed," he said.

The college is also facing other problems, including lack of security measures at the female students' hostel, persistent waterlogging during monsoon and inadequate transportation facilities for students and teachers.

"I have written to the authorities concerned about these issues time and again, but no response has come so far," the principal said.

Khandaker Nazmul Islam, executive engineer of EED in Noakhali, said construction has begun for a seven-storey academic building and a five-storey male dormitory at the old campus.

"For the new campus, an allocation for constructing the first floor of a six-storey academic building has been approved. Renovation work on some other buildings will also commence soon," he said.

HC verdict on govt move over NCT deal on Dec 4

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court has set December 4 for delivering its verdict on a rule that questioned the legality of the government's move to initiate the process of awarding container-handling operations at Chattogram's New Mooring Container Terminal (NCT) to UAE-based DP World.

The bench of Justice Fatema Najib and Justice Fatema Anwar yesterday fixed the date after concluding the hearing.

Senior lawyers Zainul Abedin, Barrister AM Mahub Uddin, Advocate Ahsanul Karim and Barrister Kayser Kamal, assisted by Barrister Md Anwar Hossen, appeared for the petitioner.

Attorney General Md Asaduzzaman and Additional Attorney General Aneek R Haque represented the state.

Don't put Hanif, others on trial for belonging to AL

Defence lawyer urges ICT-2

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A state-appointed defence lawyer yesterday urged the International Crimes Tribunal-2 not to put former Kushtia-3 lawmaker Mahbubul Alam Hanif and three other Awami League leaders on trial "simply because they belong to the Awami League".

Md Amir Hossain made the appeal after the prosecution presented the opening statement in the crimes against humanity case against the four over the killing of six people in Kushtia during last year's July uprising.

Responding to the defence's concerns, the two-member bench stressed its commitment to due process.

According to the formal charges, the four accused also facilitated and abetted attacks on unarmed demonstrators during the anti-discrimination movement in Kushtia.

Investigators say Hanif ordered ruling party supporters on July 27, 2024, to use "maximum force" against peaceful student protesters. On August 5, law enforcers and AL men allegedly opened fire, killing six.

Hanif is also charged with incitement and command responsibility for killings carried out nationwide during the uprising.

In the opening statement, prosecutor Mizanul Islam claimed they had placed "undeniable proof" before the tribunal.

The co-accused -- Kushtia district AL president and former zila parishad chairman Sadruddin Khan, district AL general secretary Azgar Ali, and Kushtia city AL general secretary Ataur Rahman Ata -- are all absconding.

The case involves 38 witnesses. Following a prosecution request, the tribunal fixed December 8 for recording testimony from the first witness.

NOTICE
IN THE SUPREME COURT OF BANGLADESH
HIGH COURT DIVISION
(STATUTORY ORIGINAL JURISDICTION)
COMPANY MATTER NO. 1435 OE 2025

In The Matter of:
An application under Section- 81(2), 85(3) and 396 of the Companies Act 1994.
In The Matter of: -And-
Khandaker Md. Quamrul Ahsan,Petitioner
Ocean Spirit Limited and another.Respondent

Notice is hereby given that the Petitioner above-named filed and moved an application under Section 81(2) and 85(3), read with section 396 of the Companies Act, 1994, whereupon the Company Bench of the Hon'ble High Court Division, presided over by His Lordship Mr. Justice Ahmed Sohel was pleased to pass an order by admitting the same on 14.08.2025. If any related concern or anybody is interested to oppose the said application, he is entitled to do so by an advocate or in person. Copy of the said application may be obtained from the office of the undersigned upon payment of prescribed fees.

Khandaker Nazmul Ahsan
Advocate, Supreme Court of Bangladesh
LEGUM SOLUTIO
Flat No. H-1 (1st Floor), Hashmoon Green Cottage
6/4, Segunbagicha, Dhaka

TENDER NOTICE

Sealed tenders hereby invited by Prime Bank PLC. from reputed companies in the relevant field for providing below items:

Name of Items	Period of Sale		Last Date of Submission
	From	To	
PCI-DSS Consultancy, Gap Assessment, Remediation and Compliance Audit for Prime Bank PLC.	26.11.2025	14.12.2025	14.12.2025

Details are given on the Prime Bank website.
<https://www.primebank.com.bd/tenders>

Head of Facility Management Division

Prime Bank

দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি

১। প্রতিবেদনের নাম: ৮ ইঞ্জিনিয়ারিং ব্যাটালিয়ন।
২। কাজের বিবরণ: ২০২৫-২০২৬ সর্ব স্বতন্ত্র অংশে অংশে অংশে কনস্ট্রাকশন বাবে অস্ট্রোনিক ও নিরাপত্তা সফলতা সুবিধার বাদে এবং একদলকর্মের বিধি বার নির্ধারিত বাক্য।
৩। দরপত্র বিক্রয়ের তারিখ: ২৭ নভেম্বর ২০২৫।
৪। দরপত্র বিক্রয়ের শেষ তারিখ: ১১ ডিসেম্বর ২০২৫।
৫। দরপত্র খোলার তারিখ: ১১ ডিসেম্বর ২০২৫।

বিজ্ঞপিত অফিসের জন্য ডিজিটাল কন্সল: www.army.mil.bd

আই এস পি আর/সেনা/৭৮৪
GD-2549

অফিসের ৮ ইঞ্জিনিয়ারিং ব্যাটালিয়ন
স্বাক্ষর সেলফিস

YOUNGONE BANGLADESH
Tekvision (BD) Limited
Youngone Complex, Plot # 28 & 30, Gausul Azam Avenue, Sector- 13, Uttara Model Town, Dhaka, Bangladesh.

Phone : 0241340051-55,
09612005511, Ext # 2497
E-mail : hasan70@youngonectg.com

EXTRA-ORDINARY GENERAL MEETING (EGM) OF THE SHAREHOLDERS AND CREDITORS OF TEKVISION (BD) LIMITED PURSUANT TO THE DIRECTION OF THE HON'BLE HIGH COURT DIVISION OF THE SUPREME COURT OF BANGLADESH

Notice is hereby given in accordance with the direction of the Hon'ble High Court issued by Justice Ahmed Sohel on 9th November, 2025 in Company Matter No. 2015 of 2025, an Extra-Ordinary General Meeting (EGM) of the Shareholders and the Creditors of **Tekvision (BD) Limited** ("the Company") will be held in the following manner:

Particulars	Date	Time	Venue
Shareholders	18th December 2025	10:00 am	Plot # 28 & 30 Gausul Azam Avenue, Sector 13, Uttara Model Town, Dhaka - 1230
Creditors	18th December 2025	11:30 am	

AGENDA of the EGM Shareholders and the Creditors:
Approval of the Scheme of Amalgamation **Tekwin (BD) Limited** ("Transferor Company") with **Tekvision (BD) Limited** ("Transferee Company") to consider, and if thought fit, to pass the following resolution as Special Resolution with or without modification:
"RESOLVED THAT draft Scheme of Amalgamation of **Tekwin (BD) Limited** ("Transferor Company") with **Tekvision (BD) Limited** ("Transferee Company") be and is hereby approved subject to the sanction of the Scheme by the High Court Division of the Supreme Court of Bangladesh in accordance with the provisions of sections 228 and 229 of the Companies Act, 1994, and approval of the same Scheme by the Shareholders and creditors of **Tekvision (BD) Limited** in the similar manner, Let the Transferor Company be amalgamated with the Transferee Company in terms of the Scheme.

Dated: 24th November 2025

By order of the Board

(Hasan Md. Ibrahim)
Company Secretary

Notes:
Draft Scheme of Amalgamation of **Tekwin (BD) Limited** with **Tekvision (BD) Limited** shall be kept open in the registered office of the Company for inspection by all concerned during office hours.

YOUNGONE BANGLADESH
Tekwin (BD) Limited
Youngone Complex, Plot # 28 & 30, Gausul Azam Avenue, Sector- 13, Uttara Model Town, Dhaka, Bangladesh.

Phone : 0241340051-55,
09612005511, Ext # 2497
E-mail : hasan70@youngonectg.com

EXTRA-ORDINARY GENERAL MEETING (EGM) OF THE SHAREHOLDERS AND CREDITORS OF TEKWIN (BD) LIMITED PURSUANT TO THE DIRECTION OF THE HON'BLE HIGH COURT DIVISION OF THE SUPREME COURT OF BANGLADESH

Notice is hereby given in accordance with the direction of the Hon'ble High Court issued by Justice Ahmed Sohel on 9th November, 2025 in Company Matter No. 2015 of 2025, an Extra-Ordinary General Meeting (EGM) of the Shareholders and the Creditors of **Tekwin (BD) Limited** ("the Company") will be held in the following manner:

Particulars	Date	Time	Venue
Shareholders	18th December 2025	12:00 pm	Plot # 28 & 30 Gausul Azam Avenue, Sector 13, Uttara Model Town, Dhaka - 1230
Creditors	18th December 2025	12:30 pm	

AGENDA of the EGM Shareholders and the Creditors:
Approval of the Scheme of Amalgamation **Tekwin (BD) Limited** ("Transferor Company") with **Tekvision (BD) Limited** ("Transferee Company") to consider, and if thought fit, to pass the following resolution as Special Resolution with or without modification:
"RESOLVED THAT draft Scheme of Amalgamation of **Tekwin (BD) Limited** ("Transferor Company") with **Tekvision (BD) Limited** ("Transferee Company") be and is hereby approved subject to the sanction of the Scheme by the High Court Division of the Supreme Court of Bangladesh in accordance with the provisions of sections 228 and 229 of the Companies Act, 1994, and approval of the same Scheme by the Shareholders and creditors of **Tekwin (BD) Limited** in the similar manner, Let the Transferor Company be amalgamated with the Transferee Company in terms of the Scheme.

Dated: 24th November 2025

By order of the Board

(Hasan Md. Ibrahim)
Company Secretary

Notes:
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Request for Expression of Interest (EOI)

1. For Selection of Structural Engineer for Birdem General Hospital invites EOI from qualified Structural Engineers/Consulting Firms for structural design, BOQ preparation, and construction supervision of a Steel-Structure Based 3-Storeyed Building (GF to 2nd floor Total area: 2,528sqft).

2. **Minimum Qualifications:**
Five years experience. At least 2 similar steel-structure projects, IEB membership (for individual engineer), Valid TIN, BIN, Trade License.

3. **Submission Deadline:** 5 December 2025.
Address: Room No. 208, BIRDEM General Hospital.
The Procuring Entity reserves the right to accept or reject any or all EOIs.

Procuring Entity
Brig Gen Dr. Md. Nasir Uddin Ahamed (Retd)
Cell: 017540309898, Email: brignasir584@gmail.com

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INTERNATIONAL

9 kids, woman killed in Pak air strikes

Says Afghanistan, vows to respond; Islamabad denies claims

REUTERS

Afghanistan's Taliban administration said yesterday that nine children and a woman were killed in Pakistani air strikes and vowed to respond, ratcheting up tensions between the South Asian neighbours.

The bombardment overnight reported by Kabul followed a series of attacks in Pakistan that Islamabad blames on militants based in Afghanistan.

Pakistan denied carrying out any attack. According to state broadcaster PTV, military spokesman Lieutenant General Ahmed Sharif Chaudhry said: "Pakistan has not attacked Afghanistan."

"Whenever we conduct a strike, it is announced openly and properly," he said. "Pakistan never attacks civilian populations. The allegations of the interim Afghan government are baseless."



Displaced Palestinians gather beside tents in a flooded area during heavy rain in Gaza City yesterday. Cold weather has worsened the plight of children and the elderly amid severe shortages of blankets, winter clothing, and heating.

PHOTO: REUTERS

Israeli strikes killed 127 Lebanese since ceasefire: UN

REUTERS, Geneva

The UN human rights office said yesterday that at least 127 civilians had been killed in Lebanon in strikes by the Israel military since a ceasefire nearly a year ago, and called for an investigation and for the truce to be respected.

"Almost a year since the ceasefire between Lebanon and Israel was agreed, we continue to witness increasing attacks by the Israeli military, resulting in the killing of civilians and destruction of civilian objects in Lebanon, coupled with alarming threats of a wider, intensified offensive," said Thameen Al-Kheetan, spokesperson for the UN human rights office, at a Geneva press briefing.

He said the number included deaths it had verified based on its own strict methodology but that the real level could be higher.

But Kheetan told reporters in Geneva "all the fatalities we have documented as a result of this strike were civilians, raising serious concerns that the Israeli military's

attack may have violated international humanitarian law principles on the conduct of hostilities".

"There must be prompt and impartial investigations into the Ain El-Hilweh strike, as well as all other incidents involving possible violations of international humanitarian law by all parties, both before and after the ceasefire," he insisted.

"Those responsible must be brought to justice." Asked who should carry out the investigations, he said: "When we're talking about strikes conducted by the Israeli military, the Israeli military should investigate its own actions."

"Of course, the Lebanese state has the responsibility to investigate similar violations that can occur from its side."

Kheetan highlighted that continuing Israeli attacks in Lebanon had also destroyed and damaged civilian infrastructure. "They have also severely hampered reconstruction efforts and attempts by internally displaced people to go back to their homes in southern Lebanon," he said.



Sudan warring factions not yet accepted peace plan Says US envoy

REUTERS, Abu Dhabi

The United States presented the warring Sudanese army and paramilitary Rapid Support Forces (RSF) with a strong text for a peace plan but neither side has accepted it, senior US envoy Massad Boulos said yesterday.

Trump said last week he would intervene to stop the devastating conflict, which broke out in April 2023 and has spread famine and ethnic killings across the country and threatened a split, the second in its history.

Previous efforts led by the United States, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, and the United Arab Emirates have failed to bear fruit. The group submitted a proposal to the two forces in early November.

Boulos, U.S. President Donald Trump's advisor for African and Arab affairs, said both Sudan's warring factions had welcomed the U.S. plan but neither had formally accepted the text.

AI BREAKTHROUGHS

Trump launches 'Genesis Mission' to speed research

AFP, Washington

President Donald Trump signed an executive order Monday establishing the "Genesis Mission," a national initiative to harness AI for scientific breakthroughs, comparing its scope to the Manhattan Project that produced the atomic bomb during World War II.

The plan is part of the Trump administration's aggressive, low-regulation strategy to boost big tech's race to stay ahead of China on artificial intelligence and cement US dominance in the fast-expanding field.

The White House is also seeking ways to legally stop US states from implementing their own AI regulations and has threatened to rescind federal aid to states that do so.

The order on Monday tasked the Department of Energy with building an integrated AI platform that will combine the nation's supercomputers, federal scientific datasets and research facilities to accelerate discovery in fields ranging from nuclear fusion to semiconductor manufacturing.

'2029 will be a dangerous time, BJP won't stay in power': Mamata

THE INDIAN EXPRESS ONLINE

West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee yesterday predicted that the BJP will not stay in power in 2029, when the next Lok Sabha elections are scheduled, and said that after Bengal's Assembly elections in 2026, she would "tour the nation".



Addressing a rally in Bongaon, a border district with a sizeable Matua population in North 24 Parganas, Banerjee accused the BJP of trying to win Bengal using the Election Commission and the

Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls, claiming that, unlike in Bihar, she "understands the game being played".

"2029 will be a dangerous time for you (BJP). Your government will not stay in 2029. Hurting the people of Bengal is hurting me. If you hurt me, I will shake the nation. After the elections, I will tour the nation. Remember, an injured tiger is more dangerous," Banerjee said. She also held a padayatra in the area.

"In the Bihar elections too, you highlighted ghuspaaythiyans (infiltrators). In Bihar, they (Opposition parties) could not catch your game. But we will catch your game here. The BJP will also lose in Gujarat in the next elections," she said.

Banerjee said that the state government would have fully assisted the Election Commission if they "had done SIR properly".

BNP eyes youth votes with pledge

FROM PAGE 12

development, health, agriculture, women's empowerment, sports, and religious affairs.

They added that the list of pledges in the election campaign is based on the party's 31-point reform plan.

According to sources, several teams composed of BNP's front and associate organisations are preparing to launch field activities soon.

BNP's leaflets will outline a series of promises the party says it will implement if voted to power. These include protecting the environment, introducing 50 lakh family cards for food support, planting five crore trees over the next five years, and launching special measures to curb extortion and corruption in key sectors.

The party will also campaign on its plan to establish a universal healthcare system modelled on the United Kingdom's National Health Service (NHS).

On climate and water security, the

BNP will pledge to restore 20,000 kilometres of rivers and canals, reintroduce community-based irrigation systems, and construct modern Teesta and Ganges barrages.

The party plans to provide a monthly honorarium to imams and muezins facing financial hardship and, if elected, will intensify engagement with minority communities to address their concerns.

If voted to power, the BNP will also introduce major reforms in the education sector. The school-level curriculum will include sports, arts, culture, and technical education, and the government will provide funds to students for setting up small industries.

With campaigning set to begin in full swing ahead of the February polls, the BNP is working to ease tensions stemming from nomination disputes. Party leaders said they are reaching out to those denied party tickets to pacify them ahead of Tariq's expected return to the country.

Under the supervision of Senior Joint

Secretary General Ruhul Kabir Rizvi, the BNP has rolled out a coordinated strategy to strengthen its outreach across mainstream media, social media, and grassroots supporters. The plan includes forming seven teams, each consisting of seven members, with a designated leader for each team.

Party sources said senior figures are spending more time in their constituencies, identifying weaknesses, and working to address them before the polls.

In constituencies with minimal internal conflict, BNP candidates have advanced their election preparations, training polling agents and preparing backup agents. Banners, festoons, and billboards have been put up across constituencies, highlighting BNP's 31-point promises and its broader state reform outline.

Candidates are also holding meetings and discussions with various professional groups, pledging steps to improve local infrastructure and maintain law and order.

Tulip's trial 'unfair and contrived'

FROM PAGE 2

during the trial, including being made aware of the charges against her and being able to secure legal representation.

The group, which also includes Cherie Blair KC, Philippe Sands KC, and Geoffrey Robertson KC, said a lawyer appointed by Siddiq had been placed under house arrest and warned that his daughter had received threats.

The signatories argued that the proceedings appear artificial and fundamentally unfair, and that the manner in which the prosecution is being pursued raises serious concerns.

Siddiq and other individuals, including her aunt, mother, brother and sister, have been on trial in Dhaka since the start of August this year.

The Labour MP is accused of influencing Hasina to secure a plot of land in a Dhaka suburb for her mother Sheikh Rehana, who is Hasina's sister.

Siddiq denied the allegations, which she said are politically motivated.

The lawyers expressed deep concern over the criminal proceedings, noting that the Bangladesh interim government's Chief Adviser Prof

Muhammad Yunus, has publicly stressed the importance of the rule of law and justice in Bangladesh.

They wrote, "As she [Siddiq] lives in the UK and is a UK national, she is plainly not a fugitive. She is an elected member of parliament, who can be contacted at the House of Commons, and indeed extradited to Bangladesh to face charges if there are proper grounds for seeking her extradition."

"Not only has Ms Siddiq not been presented with the charges and evidence against her, she has also not been able to obtain legal representation."

The letter added, "A lawyer in Bangladesh she appointed to represent her was forced to stand down, reporting that he had been placed under house arrest, further informing Ms Siddiq that his daughter had been threatened."

"This accords with reports of a pattern of interference and intimidation in the legal system since the interim government took office."

The group also criticised the Anti-Corruption Commission in Dhaka for making repeated media comments about Siddiq's alleged culpability.

"Given all of the circumstances, we have serious concerns that the trial of Ms Siddiq in absentia is unfair, that she does not have a proper opportunity of defending herself, or indeed any opportunity at all, that she is being tried in her absence without justification and that the proceedings fall far short of standards of fairness recognised internationally."

The lawyers urged the Bangladeshi authorities to address these issues so that a fair trial can take place.

After suggestions surfaced in the media that Siddiq had improperly benefited from her aunt's rule, Keir Starmer's independent adviser on the ministerial code, Sir Laurie Magnus, cleared her of wrongdoing in January.

But Magnus had added that it was "regrettable that she was not more alert to the potential reputational risks" stemming from her family ties and her Treasury role.

Siddiq resigned from her roles as economic secretary to the Treasury and City minister, saying the allegations from Bangladesh were proving a distraction for the government.

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Bangladesh Road Transport Authority (BRTA)
BRTA Bhaban, New Airport Road, Banani, Dhaka-1212
www.brta.gov.bd

e-Tender Notice: OTM

Ref No. 35.03.0000.000.004.07.0019.25-870; Date: 25 November 2025

An e-Tender has been invited in e-GP System National Portal (<https://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) for the procurement of the following goods and related services by Director (Operation), Bangladesh Road Transport Authority (BRTA), BRTA HQ, Chairmanbari, Banani, Dhaka-1212.

SL No.	Tender ID	Description	Tender publication date & time	Tender document last selling date & time	Tender closing/opening date & time
01	1181170	Procurement of online meeting system and support service for BRTA HQ	25-Nov-2025 09:00 Hours (BST)	09-Dec-2025 16:00 Hours (BST)	10-Dec-2025 15:00 Hours (BST)

This is an online tender where only e-Tenders will be accepted in National e-GP Portal System (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>). No offline/hard copies will be accepted. To submit e-Tender please register on e-GP Portal. Informations and guidelines are available in the National e-GP System Portal and from e-GP helpdesk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd). For further information, visit: <https://www.eprocure.gov.bd>

Tasque Omar
25.11.2025
Director (Operation)
Phone: 02-41082992
E-mail: do@brta.gov.bd

GD-2555

The Daily Star

FOUNDER EDITOR: LATE S. M. ALI

Antibiotic resistance must not be ignored

Latest official data raise serious concerns

The latest official data on antimicrobial resistance (AMR) is deeply alarming: four in every 10 patients admitted to intensive care units (ICUs) are no longer responding to antibiotic treatment. The scale and severity of this health threat—revealed after a surveillance of 96,477 patients between July 2024 and June 2025 by the Institute of Epidemiology, Disease Control and Research (IEDCR)—highlight serious shortcomings and a stark lack of prioritisation in our response. Even more concerning is the finding that multidrug-resistant pathogens in ICUs have reached a prevalence of 89 percent. There is little doubt that any extrapolation of these data to the national level, covering millions of patients, would paint an even grimmer picture.

According to our report on the latest survey, overuse and misuse of antibiotics have significantly reduced their efficacy. This persists despite laws restricting the sale of antibiotics without a prescription. Experts also warn about the sporadic use of antibiotics in poultry, fisheries, and agriculture—practices that introduce resistant bacteria into the food chain and ultimately harm the population. The cumulative effect of these can be understood from another recent survey by icddr, which revealed widespread colonisation with drug-resistant pathogens in both communities and hospitals, with newborns being particularly vulnerable. In neonatal ICUs, 81 percent of newborns were colonised with carbapenem-resistant *Klebsiella pneumoniae*, most of them acquiring it after 48 hours in hospital.

The IEDCR surveillance report notes that the use of “watch group” antibiotics—meant to be prescribed only when first-line drugs fail—has risen from 77 percent to 91 percent. These troubling trends indicate that the five-year National Strategy and Action Plan for Antimicrobial Resistance Containment in Bangladesh, adopted in 2023, has not been fully implemented or is facing significant shortcomings. At the very least, public awareness campaigns about the dangers of antibiotic misuse have not achieved the desired impact.

It bears recalling that the World Health Organization’s “One Health” strategy, which requires coordinated action across human, animal, and environmental health sectors, demands close cooperation among all relevant agencies. Effective enforcement of drug administration laws in hospitals, clinics, and pharmacies, as well as in food production, along with ensuring proper waste management, hygiene, and sanitation in public spaces, is crucial for meaningful progress.

The latest IEDCR data emphasises the urgent need for the government and medical professional bodies to review the national AMR containment strategy, identify its weaknesses, and intensify their efforts to prevent further escalation of the crisis. Failure to act decisively will lead to more severe illnesses, longer hospital stays, preventable deaths, increased healthcare costs, and substantial losses in productivity.

Protect coastal homes against climate risks

Residents need stronger infrastructure, financial support to cope

We are alarmed by the findings of a new World Bank survey that revealed that more than half of all coastal households in Bangladesh are struggling to adapt to rapid climate change due to insufficient protective infrastructure and limited financial capacity. An alarming 57 percent of surveyed households identified the lack of embankments, cyclone-resistant structures, and other protective infrastructure as the biggest long-term barrier to building climate resilience, while 56 percent cited financial hardship as a major obstacle to implementing stronger adaptation measures. These findings underscore critical weaknesses in our climate change response, leaving millions of people increasingly exposed to worsening climate shocks.

According to satellite data, coastal households experienced flooding 19 times between 2000 and 2018, roughly once a year. In the past decade, however, nearly 75 percent of coastal residents (around 90 percent based on satellite estimates) reported experiencing floods. These repeated climate shocks are depleting people’s savings and making long-term recovery increasingly difficult. Moreover, poor and agriculture-dependent households, already living on the margins, are disproportionately affected as rising salinity, extreme heat, and frequent flooding erode their land, crops, and incomes. The report highlights that by 2030, nearly 90 percent of the region’s population will be at risk of extreme heat, and almost a quarter will face severe flooding, demonstrating the importance of prompt action by the authorities.

Reportedly, over three-quarters of households are highly aware of climate threats and anticipate a major weather-related shock within the next decade. Although many have taken adaptation measures, most have been forced to rely on low-cost, basic solutions due to limited access to advanced technologies or affordable credit. While government investments in cyclone shelters and embankments have saved countless lives in the past, fiscal constraints now limit its ability to scale up infrastructure at the speed and scope required by the climate crisis. Bangladesh reportedly needs nearly \$12 billion annually for climate adaptation and mitigation, yet the government can currently provide only about \$3.5 billion. This massive financing gap, combined with slow progress on climate-resilient infrastructure and delays in national planning, poses serious risks for the coming decades.

To address these challenges, Bangladesh must adopt a coordinated approach that actively engages both public and private actors. Policymakers can incentivise private investment through risk-sharing mechanisms, climate bonds, and blended finance models that link profitability with long-term social gains. Simultaneously, scaling up early-warning systems, enhancing social protection programmes, and promoting climate-smart agricultural practices will reduce vulnerability at the community level. By integrating innovative risk-financing tools with infrastructure improvements and digital connectivity, the country can create an environment where adaptation becomes financially viable.

Foreign or local, Bangladesh cannot afford a port monopoly



Ahamedul Karim Chowdhury is adjunct faculty at Bangladesh Maritime University and former head of the Kamalapur Inland Container Depot (ICD) and the Pangaon Inland Container Terminal under Chittagong Port Authority.

AHAMEDUL KARIM CHOWDHURY

Bangladesh’s ports have always been at the centre of our economic life, shaping our ability to trade, compete, and connect with the world. As the global logistics landscape shifts and the Bay of Bengal takes on new geopolitical weight, the governance of our seaports has become a defining national issue. Foreign operators running terminals is a common practice across advanced and emerging economies. What matters is how a country selects these operators, enforces competition, and safeguards its long-term strategic interests. Foreign participation in port management is not inherently risky, but Bangladesh lacks the regulatory discipline in this sector that other countries—including those criticising us for appointing foreign operators—have long established.

Interestingly, India, whose media has been vocal about Bangladesh’s recent port decisions, has itself handed numerous terminals to foreign operators—such as DP World, APM Terminals, PSA, and other international players—years ago. The difference is that India regulates them; their port policy includes explicit competition safeguards. As a result, no single operator can control multiple terminals in the same port region, and in several cases, operators are barred entirely from bidding for adjacent facilities. This ensures that no one company, domestic or foreign, can dominate a port’s cargo flow or pricing power. In other words, India’s criticism may be politically convenient, but the underlying principle that guides its own policy is sound.

Bangladesh, by contrast, has been moving towards a structure that risks concentration. The proposal to award the New Mooring Container Terminal (NCT)—our most advanced and profitable existing facility—to DP World, while also considering the same operator for one of the major terminals at the new Bay Terminal, effectively gives one foreign entity a dominant position in Chattogram. The concern is not mistrust of foreign firms such as DP World, but ensuring that no single operator, regardless of origin, has excessive control over our national logistics backbone. Globally, ports are among the sectors where monopolies

are most closely regulated as efficiency gains can quickly be overshadowed by long-term dependency and loss of bargaining power. Bangladesh has not yet institutionalised these safeguards, which is a serious gap.

It is equally important to recognise the genuine value that foreign operators bring. When the Navy-backed team managed NCT temporarily, productivity rose noticeably within days, proving that managerial discipline, digital processes, and coordinated planning can dramatically improve efficiency without requiring new infrastructure. International operators have technology, systems, global network



FILE PHOTO: RAJIB RAIHAN

relationships, and operational depth to lift our performance even further. Their presence is not a threat to sovereignty; it is a chance to modernise. Yet, efficiency alone cannot justify opaque processes or rushed decisions. A strategic asset cannot be leased out with limited public disclosure or competitive bidding. An interim government, in particular, must operate with extra caution because commitments affecting decades should be built on extraordinary transparency and legitimacy.

Therefore, the main debate should be whether Bangladesh has created the right framework to invite foreign operators responsibly. A strong framework would begin with transparency. Port concessions are public-interest contracts; their financial terms, performance benchmarks, investment obligations, and dispute

mechanisms should be disclosed. Opacity weakens public trust, fuels political suspicion, and diminishes the government’s negotiating leverage for future concessions. While certain commercial details may be confidential, most of the agreement should be open to public scrutiny.

Equally essential is competitive tendering. Around the world, top operators prefer bidding in open, rules-based processes because it creates legitimacy and reduces the risk of political friction. Bangladesh has leaned heavily on government-to-government arrangements, which often bypass competition and create the impression—fair or not—that deals are being negotiated privately rather than secured through merit. Terminal operation is not the same as financing a mega-project; it is a commercial service best awarded through competitive processes. If we want the best global players and the best deal for the country, competition is our greatest ally.

The third critical pillar is a competition regime that prevents

Gulf states all view the Bay of Bengal as critical to their strategic and economic interests. Every port concession, therefore, has geopolitical weight. A balanced mix of partners spreads risk, enhances Bangladesh’s negotiating power, and positions the country as a connector rather than a captive. If one state-linked corporation—whether from the Gulf, East Asia, or elsewhere—dominates multiple terminals, Bangladesh’s strategic space narrows. Strategic diversification, rather than dependence, is what allows a small state to navigate big power competition with confidence.

Yet, the long-term goal cannot simply be diversified foreign participation. Bangladesh must also build its own capability. Every concession agreement should include mandatory commitments for training, technology transfer, and local managerial development. Ports are becoming digital, data-driven, and increasingly automated. Bangladesh must ensure that its young professionals and engineers gain the skills to eventually lead and innovate in this sector, rather than remain permanently subordinate to foreign expertise. The best global operators are accustomed to such arrangements and often welcome them; it strengthens the operation itself and builds goodwill. We should demand nothing less.

All these concerns—competition, transparency, geopolitics, and capability—have been voiced by experts as well as by young political and civic leaders. Their central message is not opposition to reform, but a call for rules, fairness, and long-term thinking. What they fear is the possibility that modernisation without safeguards will leave Bangladesh more vulnerable, not more empowered.

Bangladesh has an opportunity now to rethink its port governance in a way that aligns efficiency with sovereignty, global expertise with national interest, and foreign participation with domestic capability. If we adopt strong competition rules, enforce transparent bidding, and secure a balanced set of partners, our geography can become a source of enduring strength. Without these, we risk creating dependencies that future generations will have to undo at a great cost. We deserve modernisation that strengthens the country, not shortcuts that weaken its negotiating position. If we are thoughtful, disciplined, and transparent, our ports will not only become more efficient; they will become pillars of national power, economic resilience, and strategic autonomy in a rapidly changing region.

COP30 GENDER ACTION PLAN

A victory without power?



Farah Kabir is country director at ActionAid Bangladesh.

FARAH KABIR

As the curtains fell on COP30 in Belém on November 21, negotiators hailed what they insist is a triumph for multilateralism. At least 195 Parties approved the Belém Package, which includes 29 decisions covering just transition, adaptation finance, trade, gender, and technology. The message from the podium is clear: global cooperation is alive, consensus has been restored, and climate action is set to accelerate in ways that benefit people.

However, without enforceable finance and political will, the Gender Action Plan (GAP) adopted in Belém risks becoming another trophy text—celebrated at signing ceremonies, sidelined in national budgets, and powerless to shift the patriarchal structures that still shape climate governance.

Parties are committed to tripling adaptation finance by 2035, with developed countries expected to significantly boost support for the developing nations, withstanding the worst of climate impacts. The Baku Adaptation Roadmap now sets work until 2028, leading into the next Global Stocktake, the fundamental component of the Paris Agreement. Negotiators also finalised 59 voluntary, non-prescriptive indicators to track progress under the Global Goal on Adaptation across water, food,

health, ecosystems, infrastructure, and livelihoods, integrating finance, technology, and capacity-building.

Belém also delivered a Just Transition Mechanism that explicitly places people and equity at the centre of climate responses, aiming to enhance cooperation, technical assistance, capacity building, and knowledge sharing. Meanwhile, the Belém Health Action Plan, endorsed by more than 30 countries and 50 organisations, mobilised \$300 million to strengthen climate resilient health systems and disease prevention in the Global South.

Taken together, the Belém Package appears comprehensive. It demonstrates that the machinery of multilateralism can still produce agreement. Yet, consensus is not the same as justice. For gender advocates, celebration is tempered by a familiar structural problem: ambition without resources.

The revised GAP, secured through years of feminist advocacy, includes real advances. It enhances support for national gender and climate focal points, promotes gender-responsive budgeting, and recognises structurally excluded groups, including Indigenous, Afro-descendant, and rural women. It mandates guidelines to protect women environmental defenders, opens space to address care work, health,

and violence against women, includes gender- and age-disaggregated data, and strengthens coherence with the Rio Conventions and the UN Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC). With 27 activities, it provides multiple pathways for implementation, including nationally.

These gains were not gifted; they were fought for. They reflect feminist expertise shaping climate policy.

Yet, they sit alongside stark regressions. Foundational human rights language, central to the Lima Work Programme on Gender, has been removed from the GAP. The intersectional framing activists demanded appears only as a diluted reference to “multidimensional factors,” revealing the enduring discomfort with naming systems of oppression. This retreat signals whose experiences are permitted in global climate narratives and whose are erased.

Most critically, the GAP lacks binding indicators and financial guarantees. Without mandatory gender budgeting and enforceable accountability, implementation becomes optional.

This weakness becomes glaring when set against the finance discussions. The much-hyped Baku-to-Belém Roadmap proposes mobilising \$1.3 trillion annually for climate action. Yet, nowhere in the final texts is there a commitment that any meaningful share will reach gender-responsive initiatives or women-led organisations.

The Fund for Responding to Loss and Damage has been celebrated for issuing its first call for proposals totalling \$250 million for 2025-26, with grants of \$5-20 million and approvals expected from mid-2026. But \$250 million is symbolic in a landscape where climate-induced losses reach tens of billions annually. For women, Indigenous peoples, and marginalised communities already

losing land, livelihoods, and cultural heritage, symbolism does not rebuild homes or secure futures.

Without mechanisms guaranteeing direct access for women-led and grassroots organisations, the Loss and Damage Fund risks reproducing the same inequalities it claims to address. The feminist critique is clear: climate finance continues to flow through institutions dominated by the same power structures that marginalise those most affected.

This is the central contradiction of Belém. Leaders endorsed a GAP that recognises care systems, environmental defenders, and community leadership, while refusing to anchor those commitments in finance and enforcement. Feminist policy cannot run on rhetorical support and volunteer labour. It demands a redistribution of resources and power.

If COP30 is to be remembered as a turning point, dedicated gender-responsive finance windows must be created for adaptation, loss and damage. Gender indicators must become mandatory within funding decisions. Direct access for women-led and Indigenous organisations must become a standard practice.

Ultimately, the strength of the Belém GAP will depend not on the text agreed upon in Brazil, but on the political decisions that follow. The world has endured too many cycles of declarations followed by underfunded implementation.

Belém promised justice. Without money and courage, it delivers only recognition without power—a feminist victory stripped of the resources needed to transform systems. The question is not whether COP30 secured an agreement, but whether governments will fund the change it promised.

How interlinked crises are driving a more unequal and unstable world



Selim Jahan
is former director of the Human Development Report Office under the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and lead author of the Human Development Report.

SELIM JAHAN

"We live in an unequal, unstable and unsustainable world."

The statement may sound simple, but it has far-reaching implications. Although it paints a broad-brush picture of the contemporary world, the reality is that for quite some time, the world has been facing multiple mutually reinforcing crises, occurring all at the same time.

Besides, inequality, instability, and unsustainability are interdependent: persistent inequalities in a society may result in instability, while instability in a country may give rise to unsustainability. Furthermore, inequalities, which operate on many planes—political, economic, social, cultural—might manifest not only in terms of outcome, such as income and wealth, but also in areas of opportunities in basic social services, such as education and health. Similarly, the instabilities may arise from conflicts and wars, both within and outside countries, as well as from economic shocks, recessions and meltdowns. Finally, sustainability is not just limited to the environment only; political, economic and social sustainability are equally important.

If we consider global income and wealth, the world is appallingly unequal. The top 10 percent of the global population makes 52 percent of the world's income, while the bottom 50 percent makes only eight percent of it. The contrast is even starker in wealth. The top 10 percent of the global population

owns 76 percent of the global wealth, while the bottom half of humanity owns a meagre two percent of it. Similar trends would be observed regionally or at the country level. Such inequalities have three critical implications.

First, the scenario reflects unequal access to productive resources, social services and other economic and social opportunities. However, it is also the result of the dominance of one group in controlling resources and services. In other words, such inequalities are indicative of economic division and social hierarchies globally. Second, persistent and worsening inequalities create despair and frustration among the people. Those who are deprived see inequalities as a manifestation of injustice, which can evoke anger and frustration. If pushed to the extreme, inequalities may result in social and political instability. Third, inequalities weaken the social fabric, damage social cohesion and create fragility nationally and globally. Inequalities thus dampen the economic and socio-political sustainability of societies.

Meanwhile, wars and conflicts, in most cases, give rise to global instability. Due to differences in definitions and tracking methods, there is no single agreed-upon number for ongoing wars or conflicts. However, there are some estimates. The Global Peace Index notes that there are 59 state-based conflicts, the highest number since World War II. The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) reports over 120 armed conflicts, with a significant

increase in non-international conflicts. Sub-Saharan Africa continues to experience the highest number of conflicts classified as full-scale wars. Civilians are bearing the brunt of these conflicts. Over 58,700 civilians have already been killed in wars last year, with civilian fatalities in the Occupied Palestine Territory accounting for nearly one third of the global total.

Economic instability also characterises

system, making it unstable and vulnerable.

Global instability, whether originating from wars, conflicts, or economic turmoil, does not impact the different groups of people in a society equally. Well-off people have many cushions to protect them from global instabilities, or at least to minimise their negative impacts. But the poor and the marginalised become even more vulnerable under unstable global conditions as they lack

In the world today, there are 122.1 million people—almost equal to the population of Japan—who have been uprooted from their homes and are currently homeless. These people have been forced to flee from their homes because of wars, conflicts and violence, fear of life, violation of human rights, or breakdown of law and order in their communities. Out of the forcibly displaced people, 42.7 million are refugees in countries other than their country of origin and 73.5 million are internally displaced people (IDPs) within their own countries.

Globally, an estimated 1.2 billion people are at high risk from climate hazards like heatwaves, floods, and droughts. Every country is affected by environmental degradation, though the specific impacts and vulnerability levels differ. An estimated three billion people globally are impacted by land degradation, and over 200 million people will be displaced within their countries by 2050 due to the slow onset of environmental changes and disasters.

All these phenomena not only impact the environmental sustainability of our planet, but also affect the global inequality and instability. The burden of environmental impacts is borne unequally by the marginalised population of the world, and climate change impacts poor countries more than the rich ones. Besides, the fact remains that those who are affected the most by climate change are not responsible for creating it. The inertia of the developed world to help the affected countries through climate funding frustrates the developing countries and makes the relationship between the developed and the developing world tense.

In the ultimate analysis, since all the multiple crises of inequality, instability and unsustainability are interrelated and mutually reinforcing, tackling them will require a coordinated approach. The world has little choice left but to adopt such an approach, with all countries working together. Without this, the future of our world would be at stake.



FILE VISUAL: SALMAN SAKIB SHAHRYAR

the global economy. It is partly due to wars and conflicts around the globe, but partly because of the global tariff hikes by the United States. Countries of the world are also moving more to something called "economic nationalism," where the focus is more on unilateral approach, rather than multilateral action; bilateral dealings are being chosen over multilateral negotiations; policymakers are leaning more towards closed economy, rather than openness. All these have been infusing elements of uncertainty in the global economic

monetary or institutional shields. It is now well-documented that various groups of society are asymmetrically affected by wars and conflicts. For example, women and children are often used as weapons of war and form the main group of war casualties. Similarly, the poor and the marginalised groups not only suffer the most during economic shocks, but they also take more time and find it more difficult to bounce back. Thus, the impacts of instability are asymmetrical across different groups of people in countries.

Dissecting the UNSC plan for Gaza and its inevitable dead end



Jamal Kanj
is the author of *Children of Catastrophe: Journey from a Palestinian Refugee Camp to America, and other books*. He writes frequently on Palestine/Arab world issues for various national and international publications.

JAMAL KANJ

US policy documents on the Middle East do not reach the daylight before Israel is given the chance to filter and gut them. The latest UN Security Council (UNSC) 2803, Comprehensive Plan, is no exception. The resolution perpetuates the same failed logic that has governed international diplomacy for decades—one in which Palestinian rights are conditioned, but Israeli obligations are delayed with no mechanism, timelines, or accountability for violating agreements.

Following two years of using food as a weapon of war and genocide, the UNSC adopted the US-sponsored resolution, not to condemn but to reward the perpetrator. The UNSC



FILE PHOTO: AFP

The resolution normalises Israeli occupation "that will remain until Gaza is properly secure from any resurgent terror threat." An open-ended clause grants Israel a permanent military footprint in and around Gaza and the power to define and determine any so-called "resurgent threat."

The heart of the resolution's inequity is found in paragraph seven, which authorises a foreign military force (ISF) tasked with enforcing Palestinian demilitarisation. The Palestinian Resistance must disarm, surrender weapons, accept foreign security supervision, and undergo vetting. Israel's withdrawal, however, takes place only "when conditions allow" and is to be negotiated between its army and ISF, guarantors, and the US.

Comprehensive Plan for Gaza is anything but comprehensive. It is narrow, short on details, rich in contradictions, and utterly lacking any overarching purpose.

Take the second paragraph of the resolution, for instance. The resolution "welcomes the establishment of the Board of Peace (BoP)" as a transitional international administration that will manage Gaza's redevelopment "until such time as the Palestinian Authority has satisfactorily completed its reform program."

In other words, the recognition

of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people is contingent, sequenced, and time-bound: reform first, demonstrate worthiness, satisfy outside evaluators, and then—maybe—they can "securely and effectively take back control" of their land. Meanwhile, Israel's commitments are, at best, deliberately vague, crafted with ambiguities allowing varying interpretations, much like UNSC Resolutions 242 and 338, written purposefully in a nebulous language that enabled Israel to evade compliance for decades.

There is not one single concrete or enforceable requirement placed on Israel: to halt its extrajudicial assassinations, military attacks, complete withdrawal, or stop the expansion of Jewish-only colonies established on the same land reserved for the supposed Palestinian "self-determination."

The resolution weakens item 7 of "Trump's 20-point Gaza peace plan", which had called for "full aid be immediately sent into the Gaza Strip." The new Comprehensive Plan replaced "immediately" with an emphasis on "the importance of the full resumption of humanitarian aid." Israel's implicit obligations are further watered down to mere "consultation" and "cooperation," giving the occupying power wide latitude to dictate interpretations and evade any real accountability. The distortion becomes even more

evident in paragraphs three through eight. These sections deepen the asymmetry: Israel, whose leaders are indicted war criminals, is elevated to a co-supervisor with veto power over every stage of Gaza's future. In effect, this resolution upends international law by granting war criminals the final word on Gaza's fate.

Paragraph three, which addresses

humanitarian aid, orders stringent monitoring of aid distribution inside Gaza. At the same time, there is no unequivocal demand on Israel to open all crossings or stop hindering humanitarian aid delivery fully. The limited aid must be policed in Gaza, but the state that used food as a weapon and starved the population is not required to do anything differently.

In paragraph four, a foreign-controlled "operational entities" strip Palestinians of their political agency by placing them under a technocratic committee selected from abroad and subordinate to the misnomer BoP. Yet, there is nothing in the resolution about the freedom of ingress and egress, no mention of opening the seaport or rebuilding the airport. Furthermore, there are no tangible punitive measures if and when Israel fails to adhere to the UNSC Resolution.

The funding structures in paragraphs 5-6 absolve Israel of responsibility. Gaza's reconstruction is handed to donors and the World Bank, financed through voluntary contributions. Israel, the power that destroyed Gaza is not asked to contribute a dollar, let alone pay reparations or assume legal responsibility for murdering and injuring 241,000 Palestinians, destroying all the universities, 97 percent of schools, 94 percent of the hospitals and 92 percent of the residential homes.

The heart of the resolution's inequity is found in paragraph seven, which authorises a foreign military force (ISF) tasked with enforcing Palestinian demilitarisation. The Palestinian Resistance must disarm, surrender weapons, accept foreign security supervision, and undergo vetting. Israel's withdrawal, however, takes place only "when conditions allow" and is to be negotiated between its army and ISF, guarantors, and the US. Palestinians are entirely excluded from determining the terms of the Israeli withdrawal from their own land.

Even more alarming, the resolution normalises Israeli occupation "that will remain until Gaza is properly secure from any resurgent terror threat."

The open-ended clause grants Israel a permanent military footprint in and around Gaza while also granting it the power to define and determine any so-called "resurgent threat."

Finally, paragraph eight mandates that any extension of international presence in Gaza must be done "in full cooperation and coordination with Egypt and Israel." Once again, Palestinians are excluded from determining their own future. It is all left for Israel since its consent is conditional on the "full cooperation."

Taken together, these provisions expose the true nature of the so-called Comprehensive Plan: a political instrument designed to entrench, not end, the structural inequality of

occupation. And less than 72 hours following the UNSC Resolution, Benjamin Netanyahu appointed Bezalel Smotrich and Itamar Ben-Gvir, two Jewish racist ministers who openly called for the ethnic cleansing and for building Jewish-only colonies in Gaza, to be in charge of, or more likely to undermine, the second phase of Trump's 20-point plan.

In short, the UNSC Comprehensive Plan whitewashes Israel's genocide and ties the future of Palestinian self-determination to a checklist that Israel is neither bound to accept nor prevented from obstructing. A plan that will lead to exactly where previous UN Resolutions, mainly 194, 242, and 338, had gone, to an inevitable dead end.

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Office of the Executive Engineer
Education Engineering Department
Pirojpur
www.ced.pirojpur.gov.bd

Tender No. XEN/EED/PIROJ/1008 Date: 25.11.2025

e-Tender Notice No. e-GP/07/EED/PIR/2025-26, Date: 25.11.2025

e-Tender is invited in the e-GP Web Portal (www.eprocure.gov.bd) for the procurement of following Works. Details are given below:

SL No.	Package No. & Tender ID No.	Description of works	Last selling date & time	Last submission (date & time)	Tender closing & opening date & time
01	WD-40. Tender ID No. 1168099	Construction of 6-Storeyed Administrative Building with 6-Storeyed Foundation Including Sanitary and Water Supply Works along with Electrification and Other Works at Pirojpur Polytechnic Institute, Sadar, Pirojpur. (Foundation Category: PILE Foundation)	16-Dec-2025 17:00	17-Dec-2025 12:30	17-Dec-2025 13:00
02	WD-86. Tender ID No. 1168066	Construction of 6-Storeyed Workshop Building with 6-Storeyed Foundation Including Sanitary, Water Supply & Electrification Works at Pirojpur Polytechnic Institute, Sadar, Pirojpur. (Foundation Category: SINGLE PILE Foundation)	16-Dec-2025 17:00	17-Dec-2025 12:30	17-Dec-2025 13:00
03	WD-63. Tender ID No. 1168002	Construction of 6-Storeyed Academic Building with 6-Storeyed Foundation Including Sanitary and Water Supply Works along with Electrification and Other Works at Pirojpur Polytechnic Institute, Sadar, Pirojpur. (Foundation Category: PILE Foundation)	16-Dec-2025 17:00	17-Dec-2025 12:30	17-Dec-2025 13:00

This is an online tender where only e-Tender will be accepted in the National e-GP Portal and no offline/hard copies will not be accepted. To submit e-Tender, registration in the National e-GP Web Portal (www.eprocure.gov.bd) is required. The fees for downloading the e-Tender documents from the National e-GP Web Portal have to be deposited online through any registered bank any branch up to above-mentioned date & time. Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP Web Portal & e-GP help desk and also from e-mail: ee_pir@eedmoe.gov.bd

Md. Zahurul Islam
Executive Engineer
Education Engineering Department
Pirojpur

GD-2550



SHUVOO—OISHEE starrer 'Noor' set for OTT release

Arifin Shuvoo and Jannatul Ferdous Oishee starrer film *Noor* is now set for an OTT release. According to sources, *Noor*, originally made for a theatrical release, is currently in its final stages of preparation for streaming. The trailer is expected within the next couple of days. The film is slated to premiere on the Bioscope app either on November 28 or in the second week of December.

Directed by Raihan Rafi, *Noor* initially began production under Shapla Media. In June 2024, the project was reportedly acquired by a new production company, Quiet & Set, which explored various release strategies, holding several meetings with the director, cast, and producers. The final decision favoured an OTT release.

The first line Inside '22' exhibition

NAVEEN ISLAM TOREE

22 creators, one mentor with a vision to see beyond perfected pieces. We are used to seeing final artworks—paintings, frames, and films that appear whole and effortless. We see the final conclusion of an artist's tangled mind. But only an artist knows the tangled path behind them: the first spark of inspiration, the hesitation between decisions, the unexpected details that emerge unplanned, and the relentless revisions that eventually shape what we admire.

On November 21, La Galerie at Alliance Française de Dhaka opened its doors to the public for the inauguration of 22 — *Step Inside the Making of*



PHOTO: COURTESY



a Dream. The exhibition, which runs from November 21 to November 29, invites visitors into the intimate and often unseen beginnings of animated storytelling—before the polish, before the frames move, before the films exist. "22" marks the conclusion of the Animation Short Film Development Workshop, held during the June–August 2025 session. Twenty participants enrolled through an open call, while two were selected for their merit and creative footprints. Guided by filmmaker Afroza

Hossain Sara, they shaped 22 distinct development-stage animated concepts.

Sara, director of the internationally recognised short film *Song of Whales*, designed the workshop as a reflective, process-driven space. She encouraged participants to look inward, to locate the personal truths at the heart of their stories.

"My question was: what did I do right to get international attention, and what did I do wrong that still leaves me unsatisfied?" she reflects while talking to The Daily Star. "I tried to pass on everything I learned—successes and mistakes alike."

Across 20 sessions, the participants explored the foundation of animation development: truth-based ideation, scriptwriting, pitching materials, storyboarding, style exploration, character and world building, concept art, production strategy, budgeting, and the small but essential skills that help a story take root.

"The participants surprised me with their ability to broaden their horizons in every class," she says. "The 20 sessions flew by, leaving behind a mark of self-acceptance through the stories they crafted."

Although each participant completed all required components, the exhibition curates their work by highlighting individual strengths—whether in character design, visualisation, sketchbook ideation, or

conceptual foundations. "The aim is to highlight what they can already do beautifully while making them aware of where they need support," Sara explains. "Animation thrives in teamwork."

Walking through La Galerie, visitors encounter ducklings searching for belonging, intergenerational secrets, psychological spirals, mythic dreamscapes—each expressed through rough sketches, colour tests, visual notes, and early compositions.

Participant Rakeeb Razzaq speaks fondly of Sara's mentorship, "I think Sara apu is one of the coolest filmmakers around here. We learned so much about direction, production, timeline, scriptwriting, storyboards and many more, which helped us a lot. She was always there, sharing her experiences and helping us find our stories. A very cool person with lots of knowledge."

Viewers lingered over sketchbooks and pinned drawings, imagining the animated worlds they might become.

"They're enjoying the little sparks," Sara says. "Even though many works are just rough sketches, they're connecting because each carries the heart of a story."

As 22 — *Step Inside the Making of a Dream* continues till November 29, it stands not as a gallery of completed films but as a testament to how imagination begins—tentative, vulnerable, intimate, and full of possibility.

Singer Badhon Sarker Puja ties the knot



Singer Badhon Sarker Puja has gotten married. Her groom's name is Shuvangker Sen. The couple tied the knot on Monday.

Confirming the news of her marriage to The Daily Star, Puja said, "We've known each other and been friends for the past year. Our families arranged our wedding. Please keep us in your prayers."

Shuvangker Sen is a model and a working professional.

Badhon Sarker Puja has made a name for herself with her popular songs which includes *Tumi Dure Dure Ar Theko Na*, *Chupi Chupi*, *Tomar Amar Bhalobasha*, amongst others.

WHAT'S THE HAPS?



'Poetry: What Burns Inside?'

Thaahor invites poets and enthusiasts to an evening where memories, emotions, and untold stories find voice. Through slam and open mic performances, participants explore the power of words, bridging personal truth and shared experience in a warm, reflective space celebrating the art of poetry.

Date: Saturday | November 29, 2025
Time: 4:30 pm onwards
Venue: Banani

NEWS

11 Tangail BNP leaders submit resignations

FROM PAGE 12
President Abdul Mannan; BNP member Ashraf Alam; Gajaria Union BNP President Abdur Rauf; and Bahuria Union BNP General Secretary Latif Mia.

Those who did so yesterday are Shahjahan Saju; Gajaria Union BNP Member-Secretary Md Mojibur Fakir; Gajaria Union Jubo Dal Convener Md Robiul Awal; Jubo Dal Member-Secretary Md Biplob; the same union's Ward-9 Jubo Dal General Secretary Shamim Ahmed; and Dariapur Union Jubo Dal Senior Joint General Secretary Sajidur Rahman.

Ahmed Azam Khan, a vice chairman of the BNP's central committee, previously contested elections from the same constituency in 2001 and 2008 as a BNP candidate but was defeated both times.

According to the letters, addressed to the president and general secretary of the party's Tangail district unit, they resigned voluntarily out of dissatisfaction with what they described as arbitrary decisions by the party nominee. The letters also mentioned political harassment

and obstacles to carrying out party activities as reasons for their decision.

The protesting leaders further alleged that Ahmed Azam Khan held several secret meetings with local Awami League leaders and activists in an attempt to secure their votes. Many of those Awami League figures are accused in cases filed over attacks on students during the anti-discrimination movement, they said.

Contacted, Abdul Based said his decision to resign stemmed from several issues.

"One of them is that Ahmed Azam Khan humiliated us by rehabilitating men from the Awami League and other parties," he said.

He added that Azam Khan, last Wednesday, threatened and verbally abused district freedom fighter commander Khaleq Mandal, sparking protests across the district.

"A person who can humiliate freedom fighters cannot be a man of ideals," he said.

"We noticed that Azam Khan prioritised Awami League leaders and activists in hopes of securing votes, instead of valuing our own party

workers. He gave them front-row seats in party programmes. When we protested, he threatened to expel us," he added.

Shahjahan Saju said the nominee's actions have humiliated BNP activists, who have endured oppression over the last 16 years under Awami League rule.

"We demand the cancellation of Ahmed Azam Khan's nomination. If that does not happen, more than two hundred BNP and affiliated organisation leaders will hold a press conference and resign within a day or two. Many have already submitted their resignation letters to me," he said.

The Daily Star could not reach Ahmed Azam Khan for comments. His phone remained switched off, and attempts to contact him through close aides were unsuccessful.

However, he told Prothom Alo that a conspiracy was being orchestrated against him.

Hasanuzzaman Shahin, president of BNP's Tangail district unit, told The Daily Star that he had not yet received any resignation letters.

Referendum to feature coloured ballot

FROM PAGE 12
The government on November 13 decided that the national election and the July charter referendum will be held on the same day.

Upon receiving the government's directive to hold a referendum, the EC began exploring measures to ensure both votes run smoothly.

Bangladesh has held three referendums so far. Those in 1977 and 1985 were widely seen as attempts to legitimise the military regimes of Ziaur Rahman and HM Ershad, while the 1991 referendum marked the country's return to parliamentary democracy.

The first two referendums were held under the Referendum Orders of 1977 and 1985 and the third under the Referendum Act of 1991.

Elaborating on the ordinance, Nazrul said that the returning officers, assistant returning officers, presiding officers and polling officers appointed by the commission for the parliamentary elections will also serve in the same roles for the referendum.

The laws and regulations governing entry into polling centres

and maintaining order during the parliamentary elections will equally apply to the referendum.

After the close of voting, the same procedures as in the parliamentary elections will be followed. The election officials will count the ballots.

If, for any reason, voting is hampered and the presiding officer finds that voting cannot proceed, he or she may suspend the polling.

The EC, if satisfied that the results from other polling centres are sufficient to determine the outcome of the referendum, will only then order re-polling in those affected centres.

"Suppose there are 100 polling centres and voting could not take place in 20 of them. If the Commission determines that even without considering the results of those 20 centres, the outcome of the referendum can be decided based on the results from the remaining 80 centres, then no re-polling will be ordered in those 20 centres," Nazrul said.

Asked whether the referendum question addressed the notes of dissent issued by the different parties during consensus talks, Nazrul said the decision

was taken in a way that it would not be unbearable for any party and it was not taken against any political party.

"Political parties or others may interpret the matter in their own way but the government has made its decisions according to its own perspective. Every word has been clarified and how it is interpreted is up to them."

Asked how voters would cast their votes if there were agreement on two issues and disagreement on two others, he said that everything has been considered in the referendum.

Voters will cast their votes based on the four proposals presented: those who agree more strongly will vote "Yes", while those who disagree more strongly will vote "No".

A massive and extensive awareness campaign would be conducted for voters' education, he said, adding that the programme will begin in the next two to three days.

The EC has made extensive preparations and the government will also carry out campaigns to ensure that every citizen understands the matter clearly.

5 hurt as cops disperse BCS protesters

FROM PAGE 12
Inspector Faruk, in-charge of the Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) police outpost, confirmed that five injured examinees were brought to the hospital.

Humayun Kabir, a protesting candidate, termed the exam schedule "unfair".

"Usually, students get at least six months to prepare for the written exam after the preliminary results are published. But this time, our results were published on September 28, and

the written exam is scheduled for November 27, leaving us with only two months to prepare for the test," he told The Daily Star.

The candidates have been protesting in Shahbagh for at least a week. Since Saturday, the movement has spread to other parts of the country.

In Mymensingh, demonstrating students blocked railway tracks at Jabbarer Mor on the Bangladesh Agricultural University (BAU) campus around 5:00pm. The blockade

continued until the filing of this report at 8:30pm, said Md Akhtar Hossain, OC of Mymensingh Railway Police Station.

In Rajshahi, protesters blocked the Dhaka-Rajshahi highway in front of Rajshahi University from 4:00pm to 7:30pm.

The 47th BCS written examinations are scheduled to begin on November 27 across centres in Dhaka, Rajshahi, Chattogram, Khulna, Barishal, Sylhet, Rangpur, and Mymensingh.

Amid fire, comes an unnamed hero

FROM PAGE 12
belongings. May Allah bless him for his courage and compassion."

The fire had started around 5:15pm. The fire service dispatched 21 units in phases and brought the blaze under control around 10:30pm.

Hundreds of homes were gutted in the fire, including those of Bokul and her teenage rescuer.

For nearly 26 years, Bokul has lived in the Korail slum with her five children.

Her husband, Billal Hossain, left

17 years ago. At the time, all of her children were very young.

In order to sustain her family, Bokul worked as a day labourer in Banani. While cutting down a tree, she suffered a severe spinal injury nine years ago. She has been unable to walk since, relying entirely on her wheelchair.

Even after the accident, she did not give up. She raised her children. Her three daughters and two sons are now married and live with their families nearby. Bokul lives with one of her sons.

"My husband left long ago, and I've been looking after the family on my own. Even now, I work to survive. Today, I lost everything in the fire," Bokul said.

Suborna, Bokul's daughter-in-law, told The Daily Star, "We were all at work. We couldn't save any of our belongings."

Most residents of the slum are garment workers, rickshaw pullers, hawkers, or day labourers. When the fire started in the evening, many were not home.

FROM PAGE 1

The committee confirms that the fire began from an electrical short circuit, dismissing speculation that the incident was planned or an act of sabotage. Instead, it points to years of ignored safety rules, the unprotected storage of flammable and dangerous goods, and repeated failures by CAAB, Biman, Customs, and courier agencies to ensure even basic fire safety in the cargo complex.

After Disaster Management and Relief Adviser Faruk E Azam handed over the report, Chief Adviser's Press Secretary Shaiful Alam said at a briefing at the Foreign Service Academy that the blaze started from electrical arcing and subsequent short circuiting inside the courier shed.

"The committee found 48 iron-grilled offices of various courier agencies in the shed, none of which had any fire alarm, smoke detector, sprinkler system or hydrant. Flammable products, including polythene-wrapped cloth rolls, chemicals, compressed perfume and body spray bottles, electronic goods, batteries, and pharmaceutical raw materials, were piled there without any compliance or caution," he said.

He added that the fire began in the extended north-western section of the courier shed, between cages used by DHL, RS, and SRK — a conclusion

supported by specialists from Turkey, BUET experts, fire professionals, and CID forensic analysts.

According to the report, smoke was first spotted around 2:15pm by Ansar member Ismail. CAAB's first fire engine arrived at 2:22pm and the second at 2:25pm, while the first unit from Uttara Fire Station reached at 2:50pm.

The report reveals widespread breaches and structural failures across the cargo village. The section where the fire originated was not built according to the approved design. About 400 tonnes of goods are stacked daily in the apron area, blocking access for fire service vehicles. There is no permanent fire station at the airport, despite its critical importance. Flammable and dangerous goods continue to be stored without safeguards, and imported cargo is handled without proper systems.

Firefighters faced severe operational barriers: obstructed access due to piled-up cargo, no hydrants, inadequate water and foam, locked iron grills, unknown chemicals in the shed, structural collapse, falling debris, and a fully developed fire burning at more than 1,500°C.

The committee notes that roughly 75 percent of the burnt goods were auctionable items that should have been stored elsewhere but were stacked inside the shed.

Warning that similar disasters may recur without urgent reforms, the report assigns primary responsibility to CAAB for structural and safety failures, saying it did not enforce fire safety or ensure compliance with the Bangladesh National Building Code (BNBC) in the leased courier and cargo sheds. Biman Bangladesh Airlines also failed to ensure protection within its leased areas, while courier agencies did not install fire safety systems. Customs House, Dhaka, is faulted for not removing auctionable goods to a safe location.

To prevent future catastrophes, the committee proposes creating a separate operator or authority to run and maintain airport operations, leaving CAAB to focus solely on regulation. It recommends limiting Biman's role to flight operations and assigning ground handling to a CAAB-appointed skilled operator.

Other measures include strict adherence to ICAO and BNBC standards, urgent approval of the fire safety plan, construction of a specialised fire station, relocation of dangerous goods warehouses, and separate storage for auctionable items. The committee also urges regular fire drills, a digital cargo inventory system, and firefighting, rescue, and first-aid training for at least 18 percent of staff in every airport department.

Two Gazipur cops stabbed during raid

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Gazipur

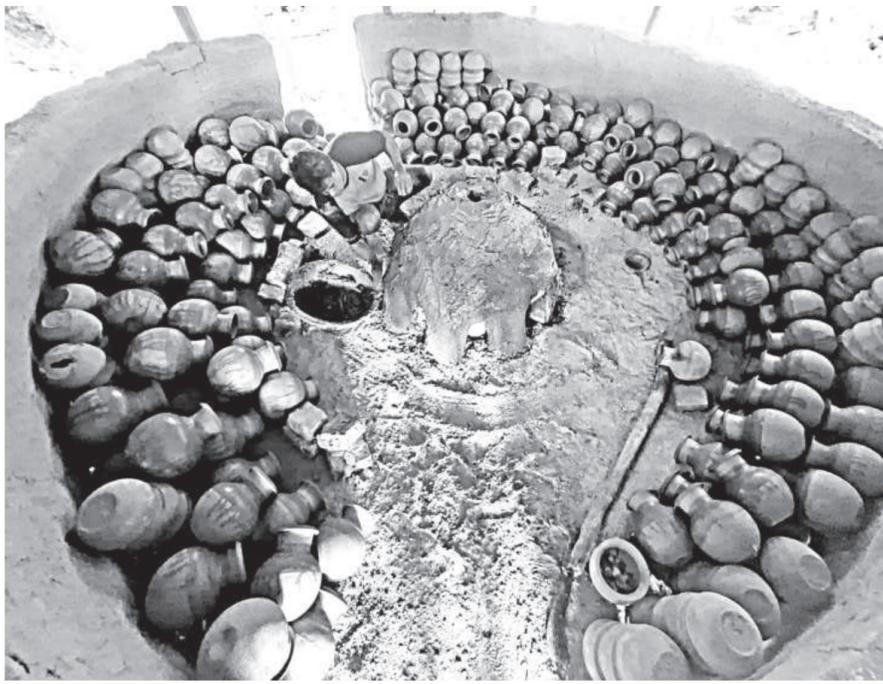
Two policemen of Gazipur Metropolitan Sadar Police Station were injured after being stabbed by robbers in Gazipur early yesterday.

The injured are Assistant Sub-Inspector Abdur Rashid and Constable Saiful Islam. Officer-in-Charge Mehedi Hasan said the attack took place in Madhya Bhora area of the city around 12:30am when police conducted a raid in the area on Monday night.

A group of robbers suddenly assaulted the officers with sharp weapons, leaving both of them seriously injured. Hearing their screams, nearby residents rushed to the spot, prompting the robbers to flee.

The injured were taken to Gazipur Shaheed Tajuddin Ahmad Medical College Hospital.

The hospital's Director Mohammad Aminul Islam said they were undergoing treatment.



Khokon Pal, 46, prepares a traditional kiln to fire clay pitchers in Shimuleswar village of Jhalakathi, Barishal. About 100 pitchers -- used in religious rituals as well as wedding ceremonies -- are sold wholesale for Tk 2,000. The photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: TITU DAS

Don't appoint

FROM PAGE 3
The CEC further noted that observers should not attempt to intervene in irregularities but must document and report them accurately, as their recommendations will play a crucial role in identifying management gaps and procedural lapses, helping to shape future reforms.

He stressed the commission's single agenda is to deliver a credible, fair, and transparent election to the nation.

Observer organisations at the dialogue raised several proposals, including arranging pre-polls training for observers, providing lunch for observers in some

cases, issuing them identity cards ahead of the polls, and organising publicity regarding referendums.

In response, Election Commissioner Abul Fazal Md Sanaulah said it is not the commission's responsibility to finance or arrange training for observer organisations.

The EC will assist observers in carrying out their work as per their guidelines and they will be issued identity cards online, he added.

Meanwhile, the EC will hold a "mock voting" on November 29 at Sher-e-Bangla Nagar Govt High School with 1,500 voters, said Ruhul Amin Mallik, EC's director of public relations.

Will disclose

FROM PAGE 3
said, "There were individuals who were supposed to be arrested, but we could not do so. However, the encouraging part is that we are very close to a verdict in one of our major cases."

He said three major cases are nearing verdicts. "If the verdict leads to a conviction, much of the credit will go not only to the ACC but also to the officials who worked tirelessly on these cases," he said.

On potential political changes ahead, Momen added, "The ACC will try to ensure that if we have raised our heads even a little today, we can raise them even higher in the coming days."

Living on the edge

FROM PAGE 3
recommendations were never implemented.

According to the office of the DU Director of Accounts, around Tk 22 crore was spent on hall maintenance over the last five fiscal years. Meanwhile, the chief engineer noted that renovating a single hall fully would cost around Tk 20 crore.

"If the authorities lack the capacity to maintain existing structures, they should not construct new ones," he added.

During Friday's 5.7-magnitude quake, a resident jumped from the second floor of Shahidullah Hall, fearing the building might collapse. He avoided major injuries, said the hall union's vice president, Tarekul Islam.

"We already knew the building was vulnerable. Still, around 400 students live here. Old cracks on the beams have spread after the earthquake," Tarekul said.

That same day, a group of Mohsin Hall students moved into empty flats at the 20-storey Swadhinota

Bhaban -- meant for third-class university staffers -- to protest the long standing inaction.

"This has been a problem for years," said third-year resident Md Ramzan. "We protested six months ago, but nothing changed. After the earthquake, it became a matter of life and death. We are not here permanently -- just until they fix our hall."

Fourth-year student Robiul Islam added, "While you sleep, the ceiling could fall. If staff have comfortable flats, why must we live with such uncertainty, especially when many of them rent out their allotted houses instead of staying there?"

At Kabi Jashimuddin Hall, two students were injured when ceiling plaster fell during the quake, said hall union vice president Muhammad Osman Gani.

"Three students broke their legs while running downstairs during the earthquake," he added. On Sunday, Jashimuddin Hall union leaders submitted a memorandum demanding that the hall be rebuilt from scratch.

Now traffic police

FROM PAGE 3
A major new provision introduces penalties for the import, manufacture, storage, and sale of horns -- an area that was previously unregulated despite being a major source of noise pollution. Officials expect this step to help curb widespread misuse of horns.

Other key directives include a ban on loudspeakers, microphones, amplifiers, and musical instruments in public places without written permission;

a prohibition on picnics in natural forests and wildlife habitats; and a 90 decibel noise limit for social events, which must end by 9:00pm. Fireworks, horns, and similar noise-generating items are completely banned in designated silence zones.

Night-time construction work has also been prohibited. New provisions have been introduced to regulate noise from factories and generators, with fines aligned with the Road Transport Act, 2018.

Enforce existing laws

FROM PAGE 3
keep moving, but our attitude will determine its course."

The 16 Days of Activism is a reminder and a concerted effort we must make every single day, she added.

Speakers stressed the urgent need for stronger protection against technology-facilitated violence.

World Bank data shows fewer than 40 percent of countries have laws addressing cyber harassment or stalking, leaving 1.8 billion women and girls without legal safeguards.

Online harassment, deepfakes and gendered disinformation are silencing women's voices and undermining rights globally.

At the event, MoWCA Senior Secretary Mamta Ahmed emphasised the need for stronger laws, coordinated institutional responses and wider public awareness.

Australian High Commissioner Susan Ryle called for joint efforts to ensure technology becomes a tool for empowerment, not harm.

"It's not just a women's issue, it's an issue for all of us. Let us stand together -- governments, organisations, champions, and women -- to build a world where technology inspires, sport inspires, and partnerships deliver safety and equality for every woman and girl."

Swedish Ambassador Nicolas Weeks said, "Proper implementation of existing laws is needed to ensure access to justice for victims of gender-based violence. It also signals to perpetrators that these crimes will not go unpunished."

The enactment of a Sexual Harassment Prevention and Protection Ordinance is crucial, Weeks also said.

UN Women Representative Gitanjali Singh said digital violence

knows no borders, with between 16 and 58 percent of women and girls worldwide facing online abuse. Such violence often spills into offline spaces and restricts women's participation in public life, she added.

"Together, we can create a future where women and girls are safe everywhere in Bangladesh," she said.

In her closing remarks, UNFPA Representative Catherine Breen Kamkong said technology-facilitated GBV must be treated as seriously as other forms of GBV, calling for clearer legal frameworks and survivor-centric approaches.

Rights groups also called for broader policy action.

Bangladesh Mahila Parishad held a press conference yesterday at the Jatiya Press Club to mark the 16 days of activism, with the slogan "Say no to all forms of violence against women and girls, including cyber violence; ensure the advancement of women and girls".

Moderating the event, Mahila Parishad President Dr Fauzia Moslem said violence against women stems from deep-rooted patriarchy and urged the media to help counter regressive practices by ensuring accurate reporting and building public awareness.

Mahila Parishad General Secretary Maleka Banu said misuse of religion and culture is being used to incite violence and warned that digital abuse has effectively doubled the overall rate of violence against women.

Speakers noted that many cases remain unresolved for years and called for ensuring women's meaningful participation in decision-making. They also called for a shift in mindset and urged lawyers and judges to ensure gender-justice for victims of GBV.

The focus on women's rights continued at a webinar titled "Stronger

Registration Laws to Protect Women's Rights," organised by PROGGA with support from the Global Health Advocacy Incubator, marking the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women.

Speakers stressed that stronger birth and death registration laws are essential to protect women's access to education, healthcare, social protection, and justice.

Speakers also warned that poor birth registration leaves girls unable to prove their age, increasing vulnerability to child marriage, exploitation and human trafficking. Death registration remains particularly low among women without property, leaving many unrecorded even at the end of life.

Rasheda K Choudhury, executive director of CAMPE, said gender disparities in birth and death registration render women "invisible," calling for amendments to the Birth and Death Registration Act, 2004.

Dr Samina Luthfa, professor of Sociology at Dhaka University, said universal registration is vital to protecting women's dignity in both personal and state spheres.

GHA Country Lead Muhammad Ruhul Quddus said hospital-based registration could help achieve SDG 16.9, which calls for legal identity for all.

The webinar was chaired by PROGGA Executive Director ABM Zubair and moderated by Coordinator Mashiat Abedin.

PRAYER TIMING
NOVEMBER 26

Fazr	Zohr	Asr	Maghrib	Esha
AZAN 5-10	12-45	3-45	5-19	7-30
JAMAAT 5-45	1-15	4-00	5-22	7-30

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Office of the Principal
Narayanganj Govt. Technical School & College
Patanthuli, Narayanganj
Web: tsc.narayanganj.gov.bd
Date: 24-11-2025

Memo No. 57.03.0000.45.25.001.25.553

e-Tender Notice (OTM)
e-Tender is invited in the National e-GP System Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) for the Procurement of following Goods.

Tender ID	Description of goods	Type/method	Publication date	Tender opening date & time
1175609	Supply of Computer Equipment	NCT, OTM	25/11/2025 Time: 17:00	09/12/2025 Time: 12:00
1178891	Supply of Stationary Goods	NCT, OTM	25/11/2025 Time: 17:00	09/12/2025 Time: 12:10
1178918	Supply & Raw materials and spare parts	NCT, OTM	25/11/2025 Time: 17:00	09/12/2025 Time: 12:15
1178951	Supply of Engineering and others equipment	NCT, OTM	25/11/2025 Time: 17:00	09/12/2025 Time: 12:20
1178966	Supply of office equipment	NCT, OTM	25/11/2025 Time: 17:00	09/12/2025 Time: 12:25
1178975	Supply of Teaching and learning materials	NCT, OTM	25/11/2025 Time: 17:00	09/12/2025 Time: 12:30
1178991	Supply of Furniture Goods	NCT, OTM	25/11/2025 Time: 17:00	09/12/2025 Time: 12:40

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

Md. Aminul Hoque
Principal
Narayanganj Govt. Technical School & College
Phone: 01556301873

GD-2546

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Roads & Highways Department
Office of the Executive Engineer
Road Division, Manikganj.
www.rhd.gov.bd

Memo No. 35.01.5600.444.07.010.25-4026 Dated: 24/11/2025

e-Tender Notice

This in an online Tenders, where only e-Tenders will be accepted in e-GP Portal and no offline / hard copies will be accepted. e-Tender is invited in e-GP System portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) by Executive Engineer, RHD, Road Division, Manikganj for the procurement of following works.

Tender Notice & ID No.	Name of work	Last selling, closing date & time
01/e-GP/PMP/EE/Mkg.Rd/2025-26. ID: 1177527	Periodic Maintenance Program for DBS Base Course & DBS Wearing Course including Strengthening by Aggregate Base Type-I at Ch. 10+500 Km (Kawalipara) to 16+000Km (Syed Mor) of Kalampur Bus Stand - Kawalipara - Balia Warshai - Mirzapur Road (R - 503) Under Manikganj Road Division during the year 2025- 2026.	21-Dec-2025 17:00 & 22-Dec-2025 12:15

(Md. Shahriar Alam)
Executive Engineer RHD
Phone: 02-996610377
eeaman@rhd.gov.bd

GD-2548

NOTICE
IN THE SUPREME COURT OF BANGLADESH
HIGH COURT DIVISION
(STATUTORY ORIGINAL JURISDICTION)
COMPANY MATTER NO: 2073 OF 2025

M. Johurul Kabir **VERSUS** --- Petitioner
E-Tech Professionals Ltd. and another --- Respondents

Notice is hereby given to all concerned that we on behalf of M. Johurul Kabir the Managing Director of E-Tech Professionals Limited, as petitioner filed an application under section 81(2), 83, 85, read with section 396 & 183 of the Companies Act, 1994 for condonation of delay in holding Annual General Meeting in the Company Bench of the Hon'ble High Court Division on 24th November, 2025; AND Upon hearing the learned Advocate for the petitioner, the Hon'ble Company Judge Mr. Justice Ahmed Sohel was pleased to admit the application and issue notices upon the Respondents. Any person interested in taking part in this matter may do so either personally or by appointing an Advocate. A copy of the application may be obtained from our office.

Mr. Md. Ismail Hossain Bar-at-Law
Advocate, Supreme Court of Bangladesh
IKS & Associates, SCBA Building Room No 5038 (H.S.S.B), Cell: 01721-465738.

NOTICE
IN THE SUPREME COURT OF BANGLADESH
HIGH COURT DIVISION
(Statutory Original Jurisdiction)
COMPANY MATTER NO. 1947 OF 2025
IN THE MATTER OF: MAAS Travel and Tours Limited
.....Petitioner
-Versus-
The Registrar, Joint Stock Companies and Firms
.....Respondent.

Notice is hereby given that an application under section 12 and section 13 of the Companies Act, 1994 for confirmation of alteration of the Memorandum of Association of the Company is filed and moved before the Company Bench of the Hon'ble High Court Division, which is admitted by the said Hon'ble Court on 03.11.2025 and the matter is posted in the list for hearing on 07.12.2025. If anyone is interested to oppose the said application, he may appear in the said Court either personally or through appointed advocate.

A.K.M. Fazlul Hoque, Advocate.
347/D/1, West Ahmed Nagar, Mirpur-1, Dhaka-1215.
Phone:01552-322034.

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Ministry of Health and Family Welfare
Health Services Division
Directorate General of Health Services
Central Medical Stores Depot (CMSD)
30, Shaheed Tajuddin Ahmed Sharani, Tejgaon Dhaka-1208
www.cmsd.gov.bd

Invitation for Tenders (Goods)
e-Tender Notice
e-Tender is invited in the e-GP system Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) for the procurement of the following goods. Details are given below:

Tender ID No.	Package no., name & IFT No.	Tender Documents Last selling (Date & Time)	Closing Date & Opening date & Time
1181819	Package No. GR-2505, Procurement of "Rapid Diagnostic Test" CMSD/GR-2505/NCT/25-26/Proc.D-1/20 date : 23-11-2025	17 December 2025 5:00 PM	18 December 2025 11:30 A.M

This is an online Tender, where only e-Tender will be accepted in the National e-GP Portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted. To submit e-Tender, registration in the National e-GP Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) is required. Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP system Portal and from e-GP help desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd)

Md. Huzur Ali
Director (Additional Secretary)
Central Medical Stores Depot,
Directorate General of Health Services,
30, Shaheed Tajuddin Ahmed Sharani, Tejgaon, Dhaka-1208.

GD-2551

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Office of the Principal
Bangladesh Institute of Glass & Ceramics
Tejgaon I/A, Dhaka-1208.
www.bigc.polytech.gov.bd
email: principal_bigc@yahoo.com

Memo No. 57.03.2692.400.07.003.25-159 Date: 25-11-2025

e-Tender Notice

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

Sl No	Tender ID	Number & Name of the Package	Tender Publication Date & Time	Last Date & Time for Tender Security Submission	Closing Date & Time
1.	1177300	BIGC/2025-26/G-1 Supply of office equipment	26-Nov-2025 Time 09:00	10-Dec-2025 Time 14:00	10-Dec-2025 Time 15:00
2.	1177256	BIGC/2025-26/G-2 Supply of Cleaning materials, other Manihari, Computer content, Educational Materials and Books and Journals.	26-Nov-2025 Time 09:00	10-Dec-2025 Time 15:00	10-Dec-2025 Time 16:00
3.	1177635	BIGC/2025-26/G-3 Supply of Raw materials and Spare parts.	26-Nov-2025 Time 09:00	10-Dec-2025 Time 16:00	10-Dec-2025 Time 17:00
4.	1177641	BIGC/2025-26/G-4 Supply of Furniture	26-Nov-2025 Time 09:00	11-Dec-2025 Time 13:00	11-Dec-2025 Time 14:00
5.	1177656	BIGC/2025-26/G-5 Supply, Installation and commission of Equipment for Glass Furnace lab.	26-Nov-2025 Time 09:00	15-Dec-2025 Time 13:00	15-Dec-2025 Time 14:00

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

(Md. Shamshad Khalil)
Principal
Bangladesh Institute of Glass & Ceramics
Tejgaon, Dhaka-1208.
Phone: 02-222242674

GD-2553

16 DAYS OF ACTIVISM AGAINST GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE



WOMEN AND LAW

Cyber harassment against women and our legal shortcomings

Bangladesh requires an institutional overhaul. The cyber units should be well-trained in digital forensics, gender sensitivity, and victim-centered approaches. The courts should be trained on various novel kinds of digital crimes and harms. Workplaces and educational institutions should come up with systemic and sustainable measures that can assist electronic harassment victims.

FARJANA YESMIN

A case was recently filed under the Cyber Security Ordinance 2025 after a manipulated image of a female faculty member of the University of Dhaka had been posted on the internet with derogatory captions and remarks. This incident pointed towards the invasive abuse of image-manipulation technologies and digital defamation as novel weapons of sexual harassment. Online sexual harassment, launched in particular against women continue to be reported nationwide. These are not isolated cases; these are the symptoms of an escalating crisis of the digital spaces and tools being weaponised against women.

Notably, the online spaces are but continuation and replication of our offline structures, and one of the most evident categories to understand this is gender. Women who engage in the public life, be it in politics, journalism, entertainment or activism, are sexually abused online to ensure that they are "taught a lesson". Such kinds of digital gender violence compromise the process of democracy, liberty of expression and people's rights and security.

Several legal provisions have been enacted in Bangladesh that target the up-and-coming challenges in the sphere of cyber security and in controlling criminal actions in digital space. For example, the otherwise problematic Digital Security Act 2018

had made it a criminal offence to publish offensive, false or defamatory digital material under sections 25 and 29. Moreover, it had criminalised speeches that call for enmity among classes or communities, or unrest under section 31. However, it was criticised for being poorly drafted and due to its potential ability to curtail freedom of speech. Subsequently, it was replaced with the Cyber Security Act 2023, which brought some minor changes by introducing lesser degrees of punishment and more bailable offences.

Finally, the Cyber Protection Ordinance 2025 replaced the CSA with a more reform-oriented approach towards dealing with the digital space and cyber security issues. It enshrines the right to access the internet, punishment for cyber harassment of women and children, and also criminalises harmful or intimidating materials generated or edited by AI. The law, nevertheless, continues to be critiqued for its ambiguous language, absence of independent oversight by regulatory organisations, and for potentially being open to political abuse.

Besides the cyber laws, criminal laws in general also are relevant, although not effective, in this context. The Penal Code 1860, under sections 354 and 509, deal with offences that infringe the "modesty of a woman". However, the Code, being a colonial-era law, is not as such directly applicable to digital

abuse and its provisions can only be made applicable through a wider interpretation.

The Prevention of Women and Children Repression Act 2000 intends to save women and children against physical, sexual and psychological abuse. The law has prescribed harsh penalties and quite commendable victim-responsive approaches. Although the provisions offer somewhat effective solutions concerning traditional kinds of abuse and gender-related violence, its stipulations were not framed keeping the digital space in mind. Section 8 of the Pornography Control Act 2012 deals with various kinds of cybercrimes against women. However, it mostly focuses on punishment but not on protection of survivors. Indeed, the absence of a rights-based approach towards the victim further aggravate its loopholes.

Indeed, we have many laws; but in practice, they are rarely enforced. There is a lack of trained officers in digital crime investigation, as well as a lack of forensic tools and victim-sensitive procedures. When it comes to gender-based harassment, a victim tends to fear humiliation and further harassment. Therefore, most women do not report such incidents considering justice will be served slow or not at all. This particularly applies to women who face gender-based threats, including sexual abuse, rape threats, or non-consensual circulation of images. The Police Cyber Support for Women is a move in the right

direction, but its scope and capabilities are far too limited compared to the issue at hand. Furthermore, the specific nature of gender-based digital violence, as has been set out above, is not fully acknowledged in our policy-legal landscape.

While the existing laws have to be streamlined acknowledging the nuances of online sexual harassment and other digital gender-based violence. Pertinently, digital violence based on gender must be spelt out not as an add-on to the general provisions. Threats that are serious should receive criminal penalties, whereas other cases should receive greater civil redress, including compensation, and administrative penalties.

Bangladesh also requires an institutional overhaul. The cyber units should be well-trained in digital forensics, gender sensitivity, and victim-centred approaches. The courts should be trained on various novel kinds of digital crimes and harms. The government should also design a standard operating procedures about how agencies should respond to cyber violence, in a time-sensitive manner. Workplaces and educational institutions should come up with systemic and sustainable measures that can assist electronic harassment victims. There should be clear reporting channels, accessible legal services, and other privacy-sensitive processes so that victims feel encouraged to report crimes.

The final component that our legal and policy framework requires is digital literacy. Individual awareness would empower people to identify and protest harassment, report cases earlier and access institutional resources. Use of social media platforms to improve reporting mechanisms should also be promoted and cooperation with national facilities should be mandated in effectively and promptly taking down online threats, doxing, or revenge porn.

Bangladesh is at a critical crossroads. The promises of justice and good governance will never be fulfilled unless online spaces are safe, gender-inclusive and rights-respecting. Sexual threats for exercising democratic agency must in no case be tolerated. Online harassment is not tantamount to mere online nuisance. It is an impediment to equality, democratic engagement, and fairness. To achieve this end, the law must be clear, proportionate and enforceable, supported by trained institutions, accessible reporting mechanisms and a gender-responsive public policy strategy. If Bangladesh is to promote democratic participation, safeguard freedom of expression and ensure that women can exist online without fear, its cyber governance must shift from reactive criminalisation to proactive protection. The challenge is substantial, but so is the necessity.

The writer is Associate Professor, Department of Law, University of Chittagong.

LAW VISION

The rise of tech-facilitated intimate partner violence in Bangladesh

ERA SHARMILA KHAN,
MD HASIB CHOWDHURY

Tech-facilitated intimate partner violence (TF-IPV) is the act of threatening, stalking or abusing a current or former partner through the misuse or abuse of technology. On the same note, technology-facilitated sexual violence (TFSV) involves a broad range of sexual abuse online, including sextortion, cyber harassment, sharing of images without consent and voyeurism, all of which are blatant abuses of privacy, consent, an array of individual rights and dignity.

In contrast to general cybercrimes, where the data or money is the target, TF-IPV attacks sexual autonomy and emotional well-being of the victims. The emergence of deepfakes, fake accounts and internet blackmail has moved traditional gender based violence into the virtual world. There is

to insomnia, panic attacks and social withdrawal. A sense of betrayal, which is caused by the emotional trauma of being abused by a loved one, intensifies the trauma, inculcating shame, guilt, and self-blame.

The new weapon in the digital arsenal is now Artificial Intelligence, which is now becoming a tool to harass, violate, defame, and shame women. Here, the catch is that many of the victims do not even consider taking any steps to vindicate their rights. This reflects their lack of confidence in the laws and their implementation process.

The Domestic Violence (Prevention and Protection) Act 2010 provides a definition of domestic violence as physical, sexual, economic, or emotional abuse, but fails to specifically mention digital violence. The Pornography Control Act 2012 criminalises non-consensual production and release of sexual images. The Cyber Safety



PHOTO: UN WOMEN

Tech facilitated intimate partner violence is not merely a cyber-crime, it is a psychological weapon undermining trust, safety and dignity. Justice is not just about prosecuting the abusers or erasing harmful material, but also about restoration of mental and emotional well-being of the survivor. Only with effective legal reform, survivor-based justice, and available mental health support, is it possible to ensure a safe cyber space for everyone.

digital humiliation coupled with non-digital harm and damage to the victims. In Bangladesh, these abuses are not a far off phenomenon anymore; they are occurring on a daily basis at the universities, offices, and within the four walls of households. It does not inflict physical bruises, but its psychological effect is severe.

A University student told the authors that "I blocked him on every social media platform, still he finds his way. I believe he is spying on me and it drives me insane". Such fear may lead

Ordinance 2025 is yet another significant development in this context, as it categorically criminalises blackmailing, revenge pornography, sextortion and creation or distribution of AI-generated sexual materials. It also stipulates that severe punishments should be imposed in cases where women or minors are the victims. This is a major advancement as compared to the Cyber Security Act 2023 that emphasised mostly on hacking and financial fraud. Nevertheless, digital abuse cannot be solved only with help of

legislation. It requires gender-sensitive investigations, trained officers, and procedures that focus on the survivors.

In fact, Bangladesh needs to respond to TF-IPV and TFSV by initiating a multidimensional reform across legal, institutional, and mental health sectors. The Domestic Violence Act needs to be revised to accommodate digital gender-based violence. Much like any gender-based violence victims, cyber abuse victims are also victimised twice by the perpetrators and a conservative society that considers them as immoral or irresponsible or worse, responsible for the crimes. This victim-blaming culture increases the extent of trauma and discourages reporting. The victims also often have to face untrained police or insensitive court officials, which makes them relive the trauma.

A justice system that is informed by trauma and vulnerability is hence of utmost necessity. TF-IPV should be brought within the ambit of criminal laws and addressed effectively in

order to close the legal, digital, and psychological gaps. Law enforcement officials, lawyers and judges are supposed to be trained to handle cases with increased sensitivity and empathy. The cybercrime departments ought to have counsellors or keep partnerships with mental health professionals. Women officers who are trained to deal with digital gender-based violence and referral systems across both legal aid and counselling services can help deliver justice and contribute to recovery of the victims. The Mental Health Act 2018 presents an option of community-based care, but it does not consider the trauma associated with digital abuse.

Moreover, digital consent, emotional abuse, and online ethics should be taught through public awareness activities, particularly in schools, colleges, universities, and in communities, targeting both women and men, to decrease the sense of stigma often associated with abuse.

Sustained cooperation with technology platforms is also of paramount importance to delete objectionable content and tighten privacy policies. In the meantime, local mental health sites must improve access to community-based services that provide affordable mental health therapy, internet-based counselling and peer assistance. The ability to make survivors rebuild their self-esteem is equally essential as punishing the criminals. TF-IPV is not merely a cyber-crime, it is a psychological weapon undermining trust, safety and dignity. Justice is not just about prosecuting the abusers or erasing harmful material, but also about restoration of mental and emotional well-being of the survivor. Only with effective legal reform, survivor-based justice, and available mental health support, is it possible to ensure a safe cyber space for everyone.

The writers are apprentice lawyers of Dhaka Judge Court.

Preparation the priority

The Infinix Tri-Nation Series, featuring Bangladesh, Malaysia and Azerbaijan, kicks off at Dhaka's National Stadium today. Bangladesh face Malaysia at 7:00 pm, aiming to build on recent improvements under coach Peter Butler. Bangladesh are preparing for the 2026 AFC Women's Asian Cup, Malaysia for the 2025 Southeast Asian (SEA) Games, and Azerbaijan for the 2027 FIFA Women's World Cup Qualifiers.

BANGLADESH: Rank 104 (biggest rise, 24, in August FIFA update)

Returning to National Stadium for first time since 2013

“It's very difficult to get international friendly fixtures in women's football. So, we're thankful.”
Bangladesh coach Peter Butler

MALAYSIA: Rank 92; Squad arrives after a one-week training camp

“Ahead of the SEA Games, it's very important for us to face strong teams.”
Malaysia's coach Joel Comelli

AZERBAIJAN: Rank 74; Fielding a second-string squad; 15 currently playing in leagues abroad

“The competitive gap between Europe and Asia is not significant.”
Azerbaijan coach Siyasat Asgarov

Head-to-Head

Bangladesh vs Malaysia
Malaysia won 2-0 (Singapore tri-nation, 2017), Bangladesh won 6-0 (Dhaka friendly, 2022), Draw 0-0 (Dhaka friendly, 2022)

Fixtures

Nov 26: Bangladesh vs Malaysia
Nov 29: Azerbaijan vs Malaysia
Dec 2: Bangladesh vs Azerbaijan
All matches at National Stadium, 7:00 pm



PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED

Tigers begin campaign against Windies in Kolkata



Bangladesh have been pitted in Group C for the 2026 ICC Men's T20 World Cup, along with West Indies, Italy, England, and Nepal, as the International Cricket Council (ICC) announced the schedule for the 20-team mega event yesterday. The tournament runs February 7-March 8, 2026, across India and Sri Lanka.

GROUPS

Group A: India, USA, Namibia, Netherlands, Pakistan

Group B: Australia, Sri Lanka, Zimbabwe, Ireland, Oman

Group C: England, West Indies, Bangladesh, Italy, Nepal

Group D: South Africa, New Zealand, Afghanistan, Canada, UAE

Bangladesh Group Fixtures:

Feb 7: Bangladesh vs West Indies, Kolkata, 3:30 pm

Feb 9: Bangladesh vs Italy, Kolkata, 11:30 pm

Feb 14: Bangladesh vs England, Kolkata, 3:30 pm

Feb 17: Bangladesh vs Nepal, Mumbai, 7:30 pm

(All are in Bangladesh time)

Co-hosted by India (5 venues) and Sri Lanka (3 venues)

Top two teams from each group advance to Super Eights

Semifinals: Kolkata/Colombo and Mumbai

Final: Mar 8, Ahmedabad or Colombo

Total group matches: 40 (February 7-20)

The tournament will use the same format as 2024 -- 20 teams in four groups, ahead of a Super Eights phase, with the top two finishers from each group making it to the playoffs

India vs Pakistan showdown on February 15, Colombo; first clash since 2025 Asia Cup

Pakistan play all matches in Sri Lanka due to neutral venue agreement

A feat 'challenging from all angles'

Domestic stalwart **Marshall Ayub** recently became only the fourth Bangladeshi batter -- after Tushar Imran, Naeem Islam and Mominul Haque -- to reach 10,000 first-class runs. The 36-year-old, who played just three Tests for Bangladesh between 2013 and 2014, never received a second opportunity despite consistently performing in domestic cricket. In a recent conversation with *The Daily Star's Samsul Arefin Khan*, Marshall discussed his milestone, the disappointments of his international career, and other aspects of his journey. Excerpts follow:

The Daily Star (DS): How satisfying is this achievement?

Marshall Ayub (MA): This is definitely a big achievement for me. Only four or five cricketers in Bangladesh have reached this mark. A few of us -- Farhad Hossain, Shamsur Rahman, and I -- were all around 9,000 runs. We used to say that reaching 10,000 runs is a major landmark in Bangladesh's first-class cricket. So, I'm very happy to finally achieve it.

DS: How difficult was it to reach this milestone?

MA: When we started, we used to play 10 four-day matches in the NCL (National Cricket League). Now we play seven there, plus a few matches in the BCL (Bangladesh Cricket League) only if the tournament takes place.

And in the last four or five years, rain washed out two or three matches almost every season. These disruptions and the reduced number of matches made things challenging.

Another big challenge was playing with the Duke ball in the last four or five years. It swings more and gives fast bowlers a bigger advantage, so big innings are rare. Maintaining fitness over a long career is also tough. Considering everything, it was challenging from all angles to reach



10,000 runs.

DS: As someone who mainly plays first-class cricket, how do you manage the off-season period?

MA: After the Dhaka Premier League ends, we usually take a break for one to one-and-a-half months. Then we focus heavily on fitness and skill work.

Earlier, leagues used to take place in cities like Sylhet, Chattogram, Khulna, and Rajshahi. But for many years, those leagues haven't happened regularly. So we spend most of the off-season working on fitness. For the last two or three years, I've

been training with [Yakub Chowdhury] Dalim bhai, who has helped me a lot. That's how the off-season goes.

DS: Your international career was short.

MA: I was dropped around 2014-15. After that, I became the highest run-scorer in both the BCL and NCL, but I wasn't called up again. Even when I performed consistently for two years, nothing happened. It still hurts when I think about it. Players like us don't have many facilities; I grew up in Dhaka but sometimes couldn't use the Mirpur indoor facilities. If we had more support and better facilities, maybe I could have reached 10,000 runs one or two seasons earlier. Being underestimated like that is painful.

DS: You were unlucky not to get more chances compared to young players at present.

MA: Of course, I'm a middle-order batsman, but internationally I was made to bat at number three. I didn't get to play in my usual position, which was painful.

DS: Why do young players today show less interest in first-class cricket?

MA: Players in the national team who play all formats find it difficult to play four-day matches. They want breaks for family.

Another reason is match fees, which are low compared to other countries. In modern cricket, youngsters prefer white-ball formats. That's why interest in four-day cricket is low.

DS: How do you see the current state of domestic cricket in Bangladesh?

MA: When we started, our seniors used to say our wickets were not good -- they favoured spinners too much. Recently, the wickets have improved slightly. We're a Test-playing nation for 25 years, yet our first-class wickets have only improved in the last two or three years. If we want to develop and truly enjoy Test cricket, we must have sporting wickets in domestic cricket. And again, if the match fees improve, players will take first-class cricket more seriously.

DS: How long do you see yourself continuing?

MA: I haven't thought about international cricket for seven or eight years. I play for my family; sometimes they come to watch, and my children enjoy it -- that motivates me. Players like me, Naeem [Islam] bhai, and Shuvo [Shamsur Rahman] know one bad year can make people say our time is over, so we take that as a challenge. As long as I enjoy the game, I want to continue playing red-ball cricket.

Arsenal, Bayern put perfect records on the line

STAR SPORTS DESK

Arsenal and Bayern Munich -- the two top-ranked teams in this season's Champions League -- collide in a blockbuster Matchday 5 encounter at the Emirates Stadium on Wednesday.

Mikel Arteta and Vincent Kompany have guided their teams to 12 points from 12, while also leading their respective domestic leagues.

Arsenal boast the competition's only unbeaten defence, while Bayern have scored a joint-high 14 goals -- level with PSG. Harry Kane, who has 15 goals in 21 career appearances against the Gunners, will again be central to Bayern's threat. He has struck six times in 10 matches at the Emirates -- the most by any visiting player.

The Gunners enter the clash unbeaten in 15 games since their August defeat to Liverpool, winning 13 and drawing two. Their eight-match winning run in Champions League league-stage fixtures, with a combined 24-2 goal tally, is the longest in the club's history.

Bayern's European form is even more imposing. Since a 3-0 loss to PSG in 2017, they have suffered only three defeats in 52 league-stage matches -- all away from home. Kompany's side have won a record 17 of their 18 games in all competitions, the only blemish a 2-2 draw with Union Berlin.

Arsenal, however, have painful memories of this fixture. Bayern have eliminated them several times, including last season's 3-2 aggregate win in the quarterfinal and three consecutive 5-1 defeats in 2015-16 and 2016-17 before that, and the Gunners are winless in the last five meetings. Wednesday marks their 15th Champions League clash -- more than Arsenal have faced any other team.

Is Ankon the new middle-order solution for Bangladesh?

ABDULLAH AL MEHDI

Batting crises have long been a recurring feature for Bangladesh, and the attempts to manage them often appear tentative -- driven more by hope than by evidence-backed planning.

With less than three months before the T20 World Cup, top teams have already settled their combinations. Bangladesh, meanwhile, are still searching for answers to a recent concern in the shortest format: the instability in the middle order.

Mahidul Islam Ankon has emerged as the newest attempt at a solution -- or at least a hopeful patch. The wicketkeeper-batter earned his maiden T20I call-up for the upcoming three-match series against Ireland, starting Thursday in Chattogram. His inclusion comes as Bangladesh left out Shamim Hossain, signaling a direct move to reinforce the middle order.

The selectors have been eager to reshape the batting core with the World Cup approaching. Ankon's selection gained weight primarily due to his Bangladesh Premier League (BPL) performances earlier this year, where he finished among the top run-scorers with a strike rate above 170.

However, his recent form tells a different story. His highest score during the Asia Cup Rising Stars -- 27 not out against Afghanistan A -- was followed by three single-digit dismissals, including a five-ball duck in the final against



PHOTO: BCB

Pakistan Shaheens, which Bangladesh eventually lost in a Super Over.

In that context, his T20I call-up comes at a time when his white-ball performances have not been particularly convincing. This is in contrast to his Test call-ups last year -- the second South Africa Test and the West Indies series -- when he had produced consistent outings in the domestic longer-format competitions.

"We have a few players for similar positions -- [Nurul Hasan] Sohan, Jaker [Ali] and Shamim [Hossain]," Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) chairman of the selection panel Gazi Ashraf

Hossain Lipu said when explaining Ankon's selection. "We wanted to give an opportunity, since there is not much chance available before the World Cup, to someone who can play at number four or five."

Lipu added that the selectors wanted a fair, like-for-like assessment. "In this category, BPL was the format. Ankon was impressive there last time. In that light, and considering our long-term vision, we made the consideration."

It appears the management is hoping that one of the players tested during the Asia Cup Rising Stars will translate those opportunities into stability for the national side's vulnerable batting order.

"In the West Indies series, we had Shanto and [Towhid] Hridoy out injured and learned that we need players ready," Lipu said. "In the Emerging teams, we tried three middle-order players to see how they respond to a slightly lower level than the national team. With the World Cup coming up, we can't give numerous chances, so from the prospective options we felt Ankon might occupy that position. His recent white-ball performances in the Windies ODIs were also considered."

While Bangladesh continue their T20I experiments, Ankon now has a significant opportunity to prove himself. Yet the larger concern remains unchanged: even the available options during such batting crises rarely inspire confidence -- a problem rooted far deeper than selection alone.



India's Sai Sudharsan and nightwatchman Kuldeep Yadav look dejected as they walk back to the pavilion at the end of fourth day's play of the second Test against South Africa in Guwahati yesterday. South Africa are now on the brink of a first series win in India in 25 years, as they had the hosts tottering at 27-2 after setting a mammoth target of 549.

PHOTO: AFP



5 hurt as cops disperse BCS protesters at Shahbagh

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

At least five people were injured yesterday as police baton-charged and used water cannons to disperse candidates of 47th BCS examination, demanding postponement of their written test, in the capital's Shahbagh area.

The clash ensued around 5:30pm when the protesters, who had been blocking one side of the road from the Faculty of Fine Art to the Shahbagh intersection since noon, attempted to break police barricades and march towards Jamuna, the residence of the chief adviser.

"We were preparing to march towards Jamuna. Police attacked us without any provocation. I was hit in the head," one protester told The Daily Star.

Khalid Monsur, OC of Shahbagh Police Station, said the protesters were still positioned in front of the Institute of Fine Arts (Charukola) as of 8:30pm.

SEE PAGE 8 COL 1



Women activists from dozens of rights organisations stage a torch procession on Manik Mia Avenue in the capital yesterday afternoon to mark the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

Referendum to feature coloured ballot papers

Expatriates can cast vote in both polls, referendum

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Advisory Council yesterday approved the draft of the Referendum Ordinance, 2025, which includes a provision allowing expatriates to cast their votes in the referendum.

The decision was finalised at a meeting held at the office of Chief Adviser Muhammad Yunus, who chaired the meeting.

The gazette of the ordinance will be issued within a day or two, said Law Adviser Asif Nazrul while briefing reporters after the meeting at the Foreign Service Academy.

For the first time, expatriates will have the opportunity to cast their votes in both the parliamentary elections and the referendum through postal ballots, said Election Commission Secretary Akhtar Ahmed.

Expatriates registering through the EC's app will receive ballot papers for both the parliamentary elections and the referendum in the same envelope; they will need to send the ballot papers back in the same envelope.

Two different coloured ballot papers will be used, and during counting, the ballots will be counted separately.

The referendum will be held on a single question, but it will have four parts pertaining to constitutional reforms.

For holding the referendum, a law is a must.

SEE PAGE 8 COL 4

Amid fire, comes an unnamed hero

Teen saves wheelchair-bound neighbour as Korail slum burned

SHAHEEN MOLLAH

As a devastating fire swept through the capital's Korail slum last night, 45-year-old Bokul Begum was trapped alone in her small room.

Paraplegic and unable to move, she lay on her bed — terrified and helpless — while the flames closed in.

She screamed for help, but it vanished into the chaos. As she braced for the worst, a teenage neighbour burst through the smoke and appeared like a miracle.

"When the fire broke out, I panicked and started screaming. I didn't know what to do... I could only cry out for help," she told The Daily Star last night.

"But no one heard my cries. Everyone was rushing to escape, desperate to save their belongings. Amid that chaos, the boy from two homes down appeared out of nowhere... He carried me onto my wheelchair and pushed me through the smoke to safety."

Bokul recognised the boy but could not recall his name.

"The moments he gave to save me were moments he could have used to salvage his own

SEE PAGE 8 COL 1



Bokul Begum

BNP eyes youth votes with pledge of one crore jobs

SAJJAD HOSSAIN

The BNP, in its election campaign, will pledge to create one crore jobs within 18 months if voted to power, along with a one-year allowance for educated unemployed youth.

According to sources, the party will run its campaign prioritising young voters.

However, catering to all segments of the population, the BNP, in its campaign, is also likely to highlight its plans to introduce family cards to provide food support, as well as farmers' cards, which will enable them to obtain seeds, fertilizer and other support, and healthcare cards, the sources added.

Pledges to ensuring safety, equal opportunity, and freedom for women and minority communities will also be a major focus, they added.

The campaign issues were discussed at a Standing Committee meeting at the party chairperson's Gulshan office on Monday night, where top leaders reviewed the party's likely campaign strategy. BNP acting chairman Tarique Rahman joined the meeting virtually from London.

Talking to The Daily Star, a BNP Standing Committee member, who requested anonymity, said the party is trying to understand which messages and campaigning methods would best attract voters. To this end, the BNP

KEY PLEDGES

- One-year allowance for educated unemployed youth
- Family, farmers' and healthcare cards
- Safety, freedom for women, minority communities
- Universal healthcare for all
- Planting 5cr trees; restoring waterbodies



has engaged several organisations to study voters' behaviour and provide guidance to grassroots leaders and activists, he added.

"Let your first vote be for the sheaf of paddy [BNP's electoral symbol]" is likely to be the party's slogan aimed at young voters, according to party insiders.

Sources said the BNP is preparing to centre its election campaign on seven major issues, taking its pledges directly to voters through a door-to-door campaign.

Party leaders said the focus areas are climate and environment protection, education and skill

SEE PAGE 5 COL 1

11 Tangail BNP leaders submit their resignations

Accuses Tangail-8 nominee of taking arbitrary decisions

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Tangail

Eleven BNP leaders have tendered their resignations in protest, accusing the party's Tangail-8 (Sakhipur-Basail) nominee, Ahmed Azam Khan, of making arbitrary organisational decisions and attempting to rehabilitate Awami League activists.

Five of them posted their resignation letters on Facebook on Monday night, while another six did so yesterday.

In addition, more than two hundred union- and ward-level BNP leaders in Sakhipur upazila have also decided to resign on the same grounds, said Shahjahan Saju, the recently removed president of the upazila BNP.

The five leaders who tendered their resignation on Monday are Upazila BNP General Secretary and freedom fighter Abdul Based; Upazila BNP Vice

SEE PAGE 8 COL 1

Gaza 'survival' is at stake: UN



PHOTO: REUTERS

AFP, Geneva

Israel's war in Gaza has ravaged the Palestinian territory's economy and is threatening its very survival, the United Nations warned yesterday, calling for "immediate and substantial" international intervention.

Rebuilding the Gaza Strip will cost more than \$70 billion and could take several decades, the UN Trade and Development agency (UNCTAD) said in a new report, warning that war and restrictions had triggered an "unprecedented collapse across the Palestinian economy".

"The military operations have significantly undermined every pillar of survival," from food to shelter to healthcare, "and plunged Gaza into a human-made abyss", it said.

"The sustained, systematic destruction casts significant doubt on the ability of Gaza to reconstitute itself as a liveable space and society."

Israel's assault on Gaza has killed more than 69,000 people, according to figures from the health ministry that the UN considers reliable.

The scale of destruction wrought on the territory has meanwhile "unleashed cascading crises, economic, humanitarian, environmental and social, propelling (it) from de-development to utter ruin", UNCTAD's report said.

PURBACHAL PLOT SCAM Verdict in Hasina, Rehana, Tulip case on December 1

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The verdict of the graft case filed against 17 people, including deposed prime minister Sheikh Hasina, her sister Sheikh Rehana and niece British MP Tulip Siddiq, will be delivered on December 1.

Judge Md Rabiul Alam of the Special Judge's Court-4 of Dhaka set the date after hearing arguments from both prosecution and defence, said Belal Hossain, bench assistant of the court.

On November 23, the Special Judge's Court-5 of Dhaka fixed November 27 to deliver the verdicts in three other graft cases filed against 23 people, including Hasina, her daughter Saima Wazed Putul and son Sajeed Wazed Joy.

In addition, the trial of two other graft cases filed against 21 people, including Hasina, her nieces Azmina Siddiq and Tulip, and nephew Radwan Mujib Siddiq, is now pending at the Special Judge's Court-4, said the prosecution.

The Anti Corruption Commission — between January 12 to 14 — filed six separate cases with its Dhaka Integrated District Office-1 over alleged irregularities in the allocation of plots under the Purbachal New Town project.

The ACC alleged that Hasina, in collusion with senior Rajuk officials, unlawfully secured six plots. She was accused in all six cases filed in this regard.

On July 31, charges were framed against 29 people, including Hasina, Rehana, Joy, Putul, Bobby, Tulip and Azmina, in their respective cases.



Workers unload baskets of fish from trawlers hauling the day's catch from sea to shore. From all over the country, these workers travel to Dublar Char in the Sundarbans every year, where they spend six months catching fish and drying them into shutki, a local delicacy. The photo was taken recently.

PHOTO: HABIBUR RAHMAN

Woman, two children found dead in home Husband detained

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Bogura

Police recovered the bodies of a woman and her two children in Bogura's Shajahanpur upazila yesterday.

The bodies were found inside their home in Khalisakandi village. The mother was found hanging from the ceiling, while the children were found on a bed with their throats slit, said Shafiqul Islam, officer-in-charge of Shajahanpur Police Station.

The deceased are 25-year-old Sadia Akter and her two children, one a four-year-old and the other a two-year-old.

According to Sadia's in-laws, they repeatedly called out to her yesterday morning but got no response.

They later broke down the room door, found the three bodies and informed police. The OC said the husband has been detained for questioning. He reportedly slept in a separate room the previous night following an argument with his wife and claimed that Sadia took her own life after killing their children.

"The bodies were sent to a morgue for autopsy," the OC said. No case has been filed till filing of the report.