

## ‘Hasina, AL leaders behind BDR mutiny’

Finds probe commission, says massacre intended ‘to weaken army’

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

An independent commission has accused former prime minister Sheikh Hasina and several senior Awami League leaders of orchestrating the 2009 Palkhana massacre.

It named then lawmaker Sheikh Fazle Noor Taposh as the “key coordinator” of the BDR mutiny.

The National Independent Investigation Commission, formed to probe the 2009 Bangladesh Rifles mutiny, submitted its final report to Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus at his residence yesterday after 11 months of investigation.

Commission members said their probe pointed to a “deliberate move to weaken the military”.

At a press conference at the commission office, its chief Maj Gen (ret'd) ALM Fazlur Rahman said their inquiry had shed light on “why the massacre happened, who were involved, who destroyed evidence, who are liable, how it could have been prevented, why the military did not act, and how the plot was hatched”.

Maj Gen (ret'd) Fazlur Rahman is a former director general of the BDR.

He named Hasina, Taposh, former

### COMMISSION FINDINGS



Sheikh Fazle Noor Taposh a key coordinator

Army wasn't allowed to quell mutiny; was asked to retreat

India a 'key beneficiary' of mutiny

lawmakers Mirza Azam, Jahangir Kabir Nanak and Sheikh Selim, former home minister Sahara Khatun, former defence and security adviser to the prime minister Tarique Ahmed Siddique, former DGF

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## Tarique can return anytime he wants

Govt ready to issue travel pass, says foreign adviser; Khaleda's condition stable

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

BNP acting chairman Tarique Rahman can return to Bangladesh anytime he wants, and the government can issue a one-time travel pass within a day, said Foreign Affairs Adviser Touhid Hossain yesterday.

“If today he says that he wants to return, we can issue a one-time travel pass tomorrow. He can board a plane the day after. There is no problem. It's entirely up to him.”

Touhid was addressing a discussion organised by the Diplomatic Correspondents Association, Bangladesh, at the National Press Club.

The adviser's comment comes amid concerns over BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia's health and discussions over Tarique's return home.

He noted that travel passes may be issued in cases where Bangladeshi citizens living abroad are without their passports.



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Fifty-three years after Bangladesh's independence, countless stories remain untold. This series brings you 12 accounts of resistance, defiance, valour, and sacrifice for the motherland. Part 1 tells the story of Aburkhill, the small village that sheltered refugees and freedom fighters during the Liberation War.

## Aburkhill: A sanctuary for freedom fighters

AHMAD ISTIAK

Along the quiet banks of the Halda in Raozan upazila of Chattogram lies Aburkhill, home to the country's largest Buddhist community and, in 1971, an undeclared liberated zone. In those months of fire and flight, the village became both haven and stronghold, gathering fleeing families, exhausted soldiers, and an unlikely frontline of care and defiance beneath its canopy of trees.

Refugees began pouring into Aburkhill as the Pakistan army overran Chattogram in early April. When troops pushed into Raozan on April 13 through Madunaghat,

leaving behind 13 killing spots and ravaging Keranihat Bazar along with nearby Hindu-majority villages, hundreds of terrified Hindus crossed



### TALES OF FREEDOM

the Halda, clinging to the village as their last shelter. Many escaping Chattogram city followed, believing Aburkhill would hold.

“We, hundreds of Hindu refugees, lived inside their homes,” recalled 75-year-old Sharbindu Kanti Banik of Paschim Gujra, a nearby village. “Many later left for India. We stayed. What the people of Aburkhill did for us is unforgettable.”

The village's contribution to the Bangladesh Liberation War

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## Fish stocks in the Bay drop nearly 80% in 7 years

Survey blames overfishing as pelagic species decline sharply

SUKANTA HALDER

Fish stocks in the Bay of Bengal have declined sharply in recent years due to overfishing, raising serious concerns about the sustainability of marine resources, according to a fisheries resource and ecosystem survey released yesterday.

The survey found that the stock of small pelagic species has fallen to nearly one-fifth of previous levels -- down to 33,811 tonnes in 2025 from 158,100

tonnes in 2018.

This means pelagic fish, which live near the surface, have declined by 78.6 percent in seven years. The findings were shared at an event jointly organised by the FAO and the Ministry of Fisheries and Livestock at a hotel in the capital.

The survey was conducted with support from the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and Norway.

The latest results follow a 2019 survey, which concluded

that marine fisheries were heavily exploited, with several species severely depleted. Highly exploited groups include Tiger shrimp, Indian salmon, and large croakers.

Abdullah Al-Mamun, assistant director of the Department of Fisheries and co-cruise leader of the survey, told The Daily Star that overfishing is the main reason behind the current situation. In 1985, around 100 commercial trawlers operated in

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### KEY FINDINGS

Number of trawlers rose from about 100 in 1985 to 273

Survey records new marine species new to Bangladesh

Jellyfish abundance rising sharply in coastal waters

Skipjack tuna confirmed inside economic zone

### REASONS

Overfishing by expanded industrial trawler fleet

Improper use of fishing technology

Illegal, unregulated fishing in marine areas

Use of harmful nets; rising microplastic pollution

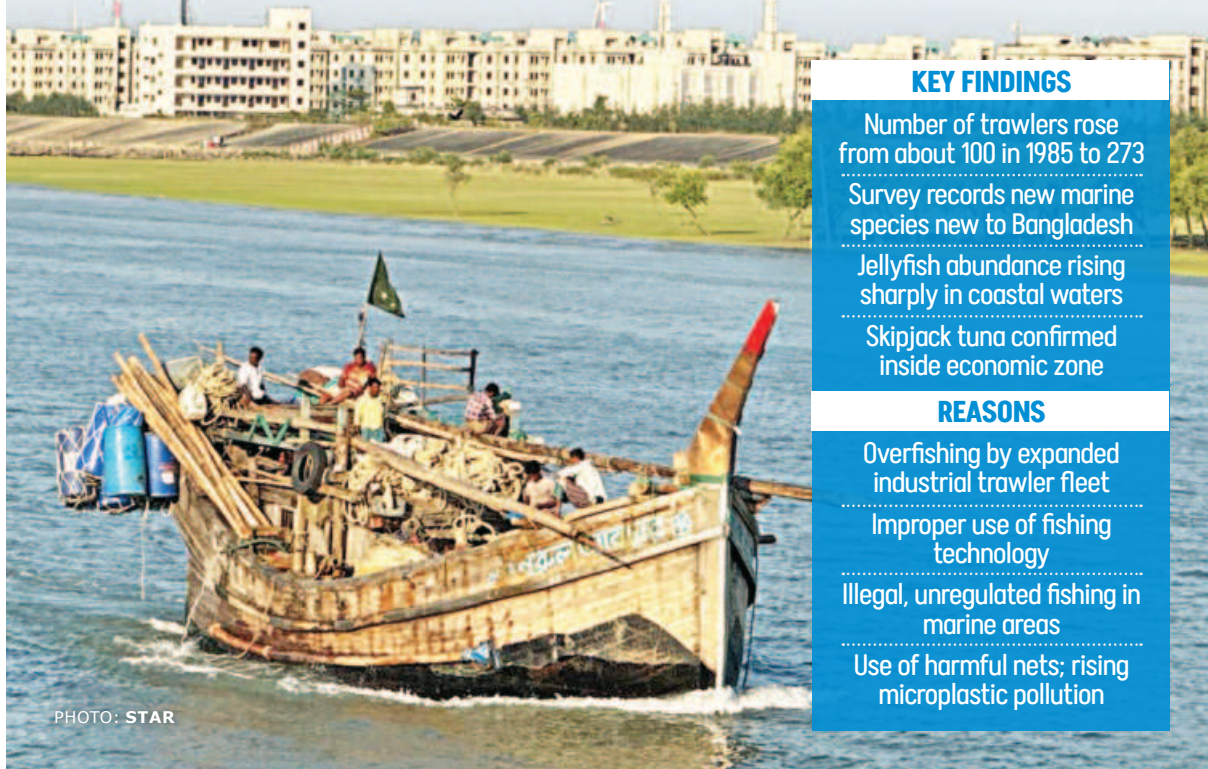


PHOTO: STAR

## Two shot dead at Khulna court gate

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

Criminals shot two people dead in front of the gate of the Khulna Metropolitan Sessions Judge's Court yesterday.

The two were Fazle Rabbi Rajon, 35, son of Ejaz of Rupsha upazila's Bagmara village, and Md Hasib Hawlader, 31, son of Abdul Mannan of Khulna city's Natun Bazar area.

Witnesses and police sources said a group of assailants on three motorcycles arrived at the spot around 12:30pm, opened fire, and at least stabbed one of the victims before fleeing the scene.

Rajon and Hasib were first taken to Khulna Sadar Hospital. They died when they were being taken to Khulna Medical

College Hospital from there.

Shafiqul Islam, officer-in-charge of Khulna Sadar Police Station, said the incident took place while the two were at the court premises to appear at a hearing in an arms case filed against them.

He added that Rajon and Hasib had six cases each filed against them with different police stations, including murder cases.

“They were also linked to Palash group and were released on bail two and a half months ago,” the OC said, adding that the group is involved in various criminal activities in Khulna city.

He said no case was lodged till filing of this report around 10:30pm. “Rajon's uncle came to the police station to file

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Hasib



Rajon

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## Syed Wasiful Islam made new Tabligh chief in Bangladesh

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Syed Wasiful Islam has been appointed the new ameer of Tabligh Jamaat Bangladesh.

The announcement was made yesterday at the Indonesia Ijtima by the World Ameer of Tabligh Jamaat, Maulana Saad Kandhalvi, during the global “Alami Mashwara”, according to a press release signed by the organisation’s media coordinator Md Sayem and sent from Jakarta.



According to the decision, Bangladesh’s current Shura member Prof Yunus Sikder will continue serving on the Shura under the new leadership, the release said, adding that Maulana Monir bin Yusuf of Kakrail and Hafiz Ojillullah have been included in the Shura to assist the newly appointed ameer.

The appointment of Syed Wasiful Islam has sparked widespread joy among the members of Tabligh Jamaat in Bangladesh, the release said, noting that he has been a senior elder (murubbi) and a member of the Ahle Shura of Tabligh Jamaat Bangladesh since 1999.

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Workers bringing timber to the “bhashoman kaather haat” (floating wood market) in Pirojpur’s Nesarabad upazila, a traditional river-based timber hub in the Kathmahal area of the Sandhya River. From here, traders supply wood to different parts of the country, including Dhaka. Labourers earn around Tk 800-Tk 1,000 for a full day’s work from morning till evening.

PHOTO: TITU DAS

## No guarantee vote rigging or killings won’t occur: Porwar

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

Jamaat-e-Islami Secretary General Mia Golam Porwar yesterday expressed doubts over the fairness of the upcoming national election



“All parties, including the anti-fascist eight, have agreed to participate in the election, but the question over the election being free and fair still remains,” he said while speaking at the first divisional city rally of the eight like-minded parties at the Madrasa Ground in Rajshahi.

Referring to killings at the Khulna court gate yesterday, Porwar said, “In a country where murders can take place in front of a court, there is no guarantee that vote rigging or killings will not occur at polling stations under such an administration.”

The Jamaat leader also highlighted that attacks, assaults, and vandalism are being carried out by one group during Jamaat meetings, campaigns, and gatherings, including those of women.

He criticised the administration for failing to prevent such incidents, saying that if the authorities cannot stop these attacks, elections under their supervision cannot be impartial.

He said a level playing field has not yet been established and alleged that the administration has been compromised through secret manipulation in postings of DCs, SPs, UNOs, and other officials, giving an advantage to one party.

## Two shot dead at Khulna court gate

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a case, but the case has not yet been lodged.”

Shamim Uz Zaman, a physician of the KMCH’s emergency department, told The Daily Star that one of the deceased was brought dead shortly after 1:00pm. “He had two bullet wounds – one in the chest and another in the head.”

Witness Alauddin, who along with others took Rajon to KMCH, said the assailants arrived on two to three motorcycles and suddenly opened fire.

“I was standing right beside Rajon’s

motorcycle. The attackers shot and stabbed him with sharp weapons. They also attacked two others...”

CCTV footage from the court premises shows several men firing shots. After one collapses, an attacker hits him with a sharp weapon. Moments later, on-duty police personnel and locals are seen chasing the attackers.

Talking to this newspaper, Babul Hawlader, member secretary of Khulna Nagorik Samaj, said, “... The police superintendent’s office is just 300 feet away, the DC office is nearby, and the entire court area is always

crowded. If killings like this take place here, where is public safety? This incident shows how alarming Khulna’s law-and-order situation has become.”

Asked who might be involved, Sudarshan Kumar Ray, deputy commissioner (south) of Khulna Metropolitan Police, said, “We have found some initial clues. We are collecting more CCTV footage.”

He added that Hasib’s body, which his family took home after the incident, was later taken by police and sent to the KMC morgue for an autopsy.

## ‘Hasina, AL leaders behind BDR mutiny’

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and former army chief Gen Moeen U Ahmed among those the commission holds responsible.

He said only the “highest-level figures” were being identified publicly, while the names of others allegedly involved were being withheld.

According to the commission chief, “frustrated officers who had been superseded” were used to execute the carnage, while long-standing grievances among BDR jawans, particularly over profit-sharing in programmes like “Operation daal-bhaat”, were exploited.

Fazlur cited the case of former army chief General Aziz Ahmed, who was superseded three times and should have lost his job but was instead made director general of Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB), formerly Bangladesh Rifles (BDR). He was later made army chief. Aziz was the BDR chief in 2009.

He said the planning began after the 2008 election and continued for months, with meetings allegedly held in mosques, on training grounds, and in various other places.

“The real aim was to weaken the forces and destabilise Bangladesh. That was the conspiracy,” he said.

When asked why there was no army operation to suppress the mutiny, the commission chief called it a deliberate political attempt. Though the 46th Brigade was initially deployed, the army’s involvement was later withdrawn.

Fazlur claimed that the army wanted to launch an operation to quell the mutiny, but then army chief Gen Moeen left the Army Headquarters for the state guesthouse Jamuna and “stayed there all day”, accompanied by the navy and air force chiefs.

This, he said, created a vacuum in command.

In Moeen’s absence, he alleged, Gen Tarique Ahmed Siddique set up “a parallel chain of command”, and the army was instructed to fall back several kilometres towards the Abahani ground.

“Inside Pikhana BDR headquarters there was no strong command, as senior officers had been killed or detained. It would have been easy to contain them if the army had intervened,” he said.

He added that although Rapid Action Battalion units were positioned 30–40 metres away and “fully equipped”, Col Reza Noor “forbade them to intervene”. The commission concluded that the army was deliberately prevented from taking action.

Fazlur cited Gen Moeen’s testimony, in which he reportedly said that if the army had intervened “India would have breached the sovereignty of Bangladesh and would not have left like they did in 1971”.

The commission chief said the inquiry found that India “benefited” from the mutiny, citing intelligence reports and Moeen’s statement.

He said 921 Indian nationals entered Bangladesh during the period and that investigators could not confirm that 67 of them returned to their homeland.

Fazlur described the intelligence failure as “mountainous”. He recommended building a coordinated intelligence structure.

In response to a question, he said multiple testimonies indicated that not only BDR members but also outsiders participated in the mutiny.

Among them, several were members of the Awami League, Jubo League, and Chhatra League.

The commission noted that a group of 20–25 entered the mutiny site in procession but later around

200 people came out.

The commission also documented attacks on families of army officers on the day of the mutiny. “Many were physically tortured before being killed; some had their eyes gouged out,” Fazlur said.

Briefing the media, the commission chief said that they also found that at least five army officers were forcibly disappeared following the mutiny.

The commission recommended structural reforms in the army, border guard, police, administration, and intelligence agencies.

“Enhancing intelligence capabilities, establishing an apex coordination body, and structural reforms are among our recommendations,” he said.

In addition to interviewing 247 witnesses, the commission inspected more than 52 investigation reports by the border force, the home ministry, multiple intelligence agencies, including the Directorate General of Forces Intelligence and the Rapid Action Battalion.

After receiving the report, Yunus thanked commission members for what he described as professional and impartial work.

He pledged that the government would ensure justice for members of the armed forces who were “unjustly subjected to discrimination and oppression” during the previous government, just as justice would be ensured for other public officials.

The commission also included Brigadier General (ret’d) Md Saidur Rahman Bir Pratik, former joint secretary Munshi Alauddin Al Azad, former DIG M Akbar Ali, Prof Md Shariful Islam of Dhaka University, and Assistant Prof Md Shahnawaz Khan Chandan of Jagannath University.

## Aburkhill: A sanctuary for freedom fighters

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lives on in the pages of Rokeya Kabir and Mujib Mehedi’s “Muktijuddho O Nari”, Jagannath Barua’s “Muktijuddhe Bouddhoder Obadan”, and Jamal Uddin’s “Bangladesher Swadhinata Sangramme O Muktijudde Chattogram”.

This correspondent visited Aburkhill and surrounding areas in June, speaking to at least 15 people – elderly residents, freedom fighters, Buddhist religious leaders, and those who once sought refuge here.

Their accounts align with the books – Bangalee personnel from the East Pakistan Rifles (EPR) and East Bengal Regiment who escaped after the first clashes also reached Aburkhill. Villagers first opened their own homes; when arrivals became too many, they opened Amitabh High School and Amitabh Primary School, turning classrooms into dormitories.

“It was agreed that the men would sleep in the school buildings, the women in homes,” said 73-year-old resident Manju Mutsuddi. “Each family took turns providing meals.”

### SANCTUARY FOR FREEDOM FIGHTERS

By June and July, as regrouped fighters returned from India, Aburkhill became a sanctuary again. The freedom fighters stayed until November, using the village as a base for reconnaissance and operations across Raozan.

Their greatest help came from an unexpected source – Bishuddhananda Mahathera, then head of the Dhamrajik Buddhist Monastery in Dhaka, and a revered monk from nearby Hoarapara. He passed away in Chattogram in 1994 at the age of 85. In 1971, he maintained deep ties with influential Buddhist leaders in China. As China remained Pakistan’s ally, an identity card for Buddhists was introduced nationwide for their protection at his initiative. In Aburkhill, nearly every resident received one, and so did the freedom fighters hiding among them.

“The cards reached fighters through the villagers,” said Banasree Mahathero, 87, then head of the Aburkhill Central Buddhist Monastery and now an organiser of the Bangladesh Buddhist Monks’ Association. “Everyone looked Bangalee, so it became hard for the Pakistan army and Razakars to tell fighters from villagers.”

The fighters slipped out under cover of darkness for operations, returning before dawn. One of their most audacious operations was the October 6 attack on the Madunaghat Power Plant in Hathazari which supplied electricity to Chattogram city and port. Fighters from Aburkhill scouted the area by boat for days.

“Under Sultan Mahmud Bir Uttam’s command, 10 of us crossed the Halda by boat and attacked

the plant,” said freedom fighter Didarul Alam, 77. “We destroyed two transformers with rocket launchers.”

The assault came at a steep price. Abdul Mannan Bir Bilkram was critically wounded; Sultan Mahmud was shot in the knee; several others were injured.

### RENU KONA’S MAKESHIFT HOSPITAL

Their only hope was a makeshift hospital run by Dr Renu Kona Barua, an assistant surgeon at the East Pakistan Railway Hospital who had

men from their homes, interrogating and torturing them. They were freed only after pleas from Buddhist leaders.

Fear thickened the air. Surveillance grew harsher. Fighters changed their movements. In late October, a Razakar disguised as a sari vendor slipped inside the village and alerted the army. Aburkhill was swiftly encircled.

“We were having lunch,” Didarul recalled. “They surrounded the village and opened fire. We fired



Aburkhill Central Buddhist Monastery



Dr Renu Kona



Didarul Alam



Manju Mutsuddi



Paritosh Barua

returned to her father’s home in Aburkhill after her husband, Supati Ranjan, was abducted and killed by the Pakistan army and Biharis.

Grief sharpened her resolve. She turned a room in the home of local resident Bireswar Barua into a clinic, trained several young women, and began treating fighters and villagers alike.

“We brought Mannan and the others by boat,” said eyewitness Paritosh Barua, now 90. “Renu Kona worked day and night, but she could not save Mannan as his stomach had been torn by bullets.”

Villagers say countless fighters and refugees received care from her. “She was the only hope for this area,” said 84-year-old Khagendra Lal Barua.

Dr Renu Kona passed away in the United States on October 27, 2015, at the age of 79.

### FEAR ON EVERY DOORSTEP

After the Madunaghat attack, Aburkhill braced itself. Watch posts rose at the edges of the village; movement shrank to necessity. But within days, tipped off by Razakars, the Pakistan army stormed in, dragging young and middle-aged

back, but their weapons were too strong. We crossed the shallow Halda and escaped to Baroighona.”

With the fighters gone, the army and Razakars barged into homes, arresting and torturing villagers for sheltering combatants. None revealed anything.

### VILLAGE THAT FOUGHT

Aburkhill did not only shelter freedom fighters and refugees. It joined the struggle itself. Ten young men left early in the war for training in India.

“All but me fought in the Mukti Bahini. I fought in the Indian Army,” said freedom fighter Temiyo Kumar Mutsuddi, 75. Others trained inside Bangladesh and joined various fronts.

Chattogram freedom fighter Abul Kashem, 82, grew emotional as he recalled those days. “The people of Aburkhill gave us everything from food to shelter to supplies. They were tortured for hiding us, but they never betrayed us.”

Didarul added softly, “Every home sheltered refugee girls. Villagers had no space of their own, yet the women of Aburkhill made room on cold floors for us. Their suppt was beyond words.”

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Tarique, who went to the UK in 2008 amid a barrage of cases, wrote on his Facebook on Saturday that he longs to come home and be by his ailing mother’s side, but the decision is not entirely in his hands.

Last week, Khaleda was hospitalised with infections in her heart and lungs and remains under treatment in the Coronary Care Unit at Evercare Hospital.

Asked whether there was pressure from any foreign country, Touhid said, “It seems unusual to me that a citizen would be barred from returning to their own country. If Bangladesh wants to allow its citizen to come back, how can another country object?”

The adviser, however, said he was unsure about Tarique’s residence status in London.

Replying to a query, he said, “There is no reason to assume that the upcoming national election will be postponed or cancelled or will not be fair if Tarique Rahman does not return to the country.”

Speaking about the health condition of Khaleda Zia, Touhid said she is currently not fit to travel abroad for treatment.

“If her condition improves and the party formally requests, the government will provide support if necessary.”

### KHALEDA’S CONDITION

Khaleda’s health has shown some improvement, but she’s still not fit to be taken abroad for advanced treatment, according to her doctors.

“She had liquid food yesterday and was responding to calls, which is encouraging. Her condition has improved slightly over the last two days. But it cannot yet be described as significant,” a source from her medical board told this newspaper.

As such, doctors are yet to decide on sending her abroad, the source added.

The former prime minister was admitted to Evercare Hospital in Dhaka on November 23 on the advice of her

medical board.

She is suffering from pneumonia and currently receiving treatment in the hospital’s Coronary Care Unit.

Party leaders said that preparations are underway so that once the medical board deems her fit for travel, arrangements can be made immediately.

Senior BNP leader Ruhul Kabir Rizvi yesterday said Tarique has been in constant contact with doctors from London and is coordinating all aspects of his mother’s treatment.

“Tarique Rahman has been spending his days worried over his mother’s health. I doubt whether he is even getting any sleep.”

Khaleda, 80, has long been battling multiple health complications, including liver cirrhosis and kidney issues. She has a permanent pacemaker and has previously undergone stent placement for her heart.

Seeking anonymity, a member of her medical board had earlier told this newspaper that excess fluid has built up in her body, requiring regular dialysis. She is also being given oxygen support to help her breathe comfortably.

### HASINA, FOREIGN TIES

Touhid also said Bangladesh has been realigning its foreign policies after the July uprising.

Regarding relations with India since deposed prime minister Sheikh Hasina fled there, he said Delhi needs time to adjust to the new realities, adding that Dhaka seeks good working relations based on mutual respect and shared interests.

He said that during the Awami League regime, the warm relations were mainly between the two governments, not the peoples. “The previous regime could not solve the Teesta and border killing issues in 15 years.”

Asked what the relations with India would be if it does not extradite Hasina, who is facing death sentences for crimes against humanity, he said the relations would not be stuck over a single issue.

Dhaka has written twice to New Delhi, seeking extradition of Hasina. Delhi last week said it was looking into the request.

“Since she is convicted, we surely want her extradition to implement the punishment. I, however, don’t think other issues will get stuck for this issue.”

He mentioned that Bangladesh’s efforts will also continue in line with its demands for Teesta water sharing deal and halting border killings, stressing that one issue is not dependent on the other.

Referring to a recent remark by Chief Adviser’s Press Secretary Shafiqul Alam, Touhid said he does not have any information on whether former home minister Asaduzzaman Khan Kamal, who is also facing the death penalty, would be extradited first.

Asked about the recent warm relations with Pakistan and its implications on the relations with other countries, including India, Touhid said since 2009, Bangladesh’s relationship with Pakistan has been deliberately kept tense.

“Now it is normal. We have course-corrected the relations,” he said, adding that it is important for Dhaka to have alternative sources of daily essentials, and Pakistan can be one such alternative.

Asked if there is any chance Awami League will participate in the next polls, Touhid said its activities have been restricted and it has been socially accepted that the party will not be taking part in the polls.

He said there have been a lot of changes in global politics, especially in the US policies, and many countries, especially ones like Bangladesh, are also realigning their positions.

Bangladesh will continue to adjust its policies with priority to national interest, he said, adding that there are some shortcomings regarding coordination with other domestic stakeholders.



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## CRIMES AGAINST HUMANITY Inu's petition rejected, trial begins at ICT

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The International Crimes Tribunal-2 yesterday began the trial of former minister and Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal president Hasanul Haq Inu in a case accusing him of committing crimes against humanity during the July uprising.

Inu, the lone accused, was present in the dock as prosecutors read out their opening statement, alleging that he fuelled state violence by repeatedly branding student protesters as BNP, Jamaat, terrorists and communal, and by endorsing curfews, army deployment and shoot-on-sight orders, including shooting from helicopters to kill protesters.

Eight charges, including abetment, conspiracy, aiding ruling party leaders and law enforcers and other crimes, have been brought against Inu.

The tribunal fixed the recording of depositions of the first prosecution witness for today.

Prosecutors said Inu, then a key partner in the 14-party alliance, coordinated with then prime minister Sheikh Hasina in imposing curfews and deploying military force against unarmed demonstrators.



Eight charges, including abetment, conspiracy, aiding ruling party leaders and law enforcers and other crimes, have been brought against Inu.

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## KHALEDA ILLNESS

## BNP postpones Victory Month programmes

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

BNP has postponed its previously announced nationwide programme titled "Bijoyer Mashe Bijoy Mashal Road Show", marking Victory Day.

The decision was made in light of BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia's illness, Senior Joint Secretary General Ruhul Kabir Rizvi said at a press conference at the party's central office in Nayapaltan yesterday.

Earlier on Saturday evening, BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir announced the party's month-long programmes for the Month of Victory.

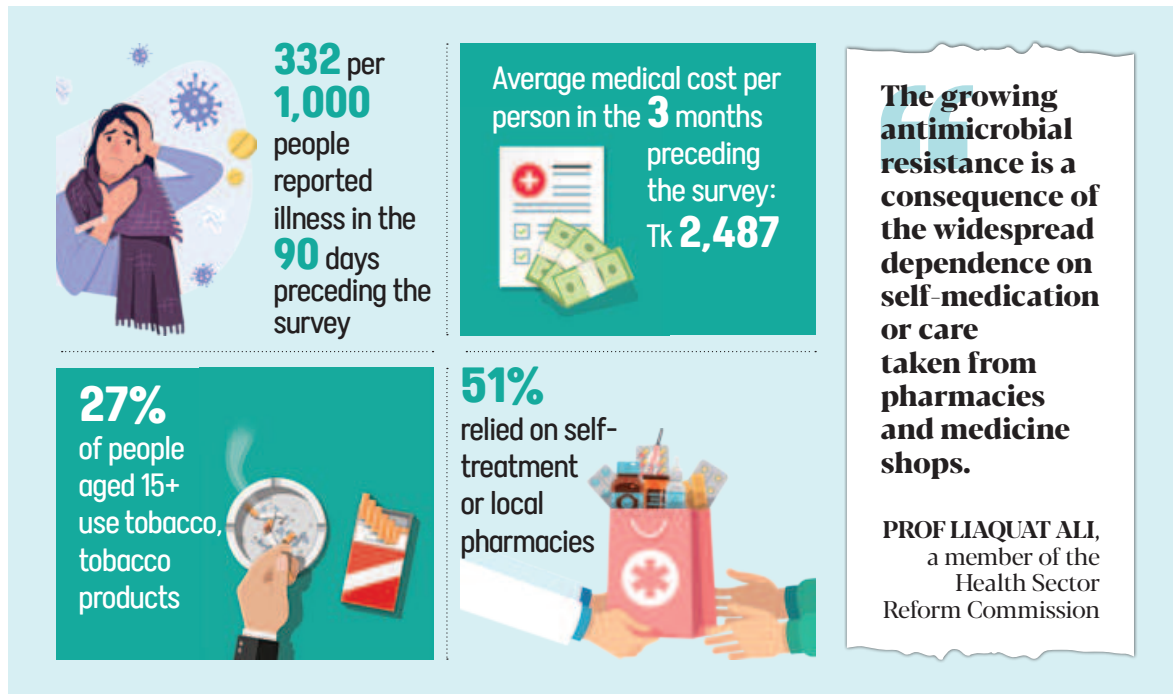
The programmes included a nationwide Victory Torch Roadshow, a grand rally on December 16 at Manik Mia Avenue, and a series of discussions and events scheduled from December 1 to 16.

Since her return from London on May 6, Khaleda has been undergoing regular check-ups.

The former prime minister was admitted to Evercare Hospital on November 23 on the advice of her medical board after being diagnosed with infections in her heart and lungs.

She is also suffering from pneumonia and is currently receiving treatment in the Evercare Hospital's Coronary Care Unit.

Khaleda, 80, has long been battling multiple health complications, including liver cirrhosis and kidney issues. She has a permanent pacemaker and has previously undergone stent placement for her heart.



## Hypertension the most common illness in country

Peptic ulcer, diabetes follow, shows BBS survey

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Hypertension is the most common disease in Bangladesh, with 78 out of every 1,000 people suffering from the non-communicable condition, according to a government survey.

Peptic ulcer is the second most prevalent illness, followed by diabetes, the survey found.

The survey also reported that one-third of respondents experienced some form of illness in the 90 days preceding the study.

The Health and Morbidity Status Survey-2025 said the average medical expenditure during this period was Tk 2,487, with over half of respondents relying on self-treatment or care from local pharmacies or medicine shops. The survey, by the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics, covered 1.9 lakh people from 47,040 households between November and December last year.

Mostafa Ashrafuzzaman, project director of the Improving Demographic and Health Statistics of Bangladesh Project, shared the findings at a programme yesterday at the BBS office in Dhaka. Officials said this is the second such survey since 2014, but many indicators cannot be directly compared due to changes in methodology.

The prevalence of illness was 332 per 1,000 population. Illness rates were higher among women, both young and elderly, compared to men.

Among women, 355 per 1,000 were reported ill, whereas among men the rate was 309 per 1,000. In rural areas, the rate of ill women

was 333 per 1,000, while in urban areas it was 331.

The findings show illness increases significantly with age. The rate was 232 per 1,000 among children under one. Among those aged 75 to 79 years, it rose to 744 per 1,000.

Peptic ulcer ranked second among the top 10 diseases, with 64 out of every 1,000 people suffering from it. The other major diseases are diabetes (43), arthritis (40), skin diseases (37), heart disease (31), asthma (31), osteoporosis (22), hepatitis (22) and diarrhoea (16).

### HOW TO CONTROL HYPERTENSION

- Cut down on oily, processed foods
- Limit salt intake
- Eat more fruits, vegetables
- Stay active
- Maintain a healthy weight
- Reduce stress

Average medical expenditure per person in the three months preceding the survey was Tk 2,487. Women spent Tk 2,576 on average, while men spent Tk 2,387.

The survey shows people depend more on self-care and informal healthcare than on institutional services. About 51.2 percent received self-treatment or care from local pharmacies. Around 20 percent sought private healthcare,

while only 11 percent went to government facilities.

Contacted by The Daily Star, Prof Liaquat Ali, a member of the Health Sector Reform Commission, said that the high reliance on self-treatment or on pharmacies and medicine shops indicates that the findings are largely based on patients' impressions.

He added that the growing antimicrobial resistance is a consequence of this widespread dependence on self-medication or care taken from pharmacies and medicine shops.

He, however, said, "Such surveys, conducted without proper diagnosis or review of medical documents and listing most common diseases, raise questions about their reliability."

Meanwhile, only 1.64 percent underwent routine health check-ups.

According to the survey, the overall caesarean delivery rate is 49 percent, with 53 percent in urban areas and 48 percent in rural areas.

Institutional delivery is steadily increasing. About 67 percent of deliveries take place under a physician's supervision, and 16 percent are attended by trained midwives or birth attendants. However, four percent are still conducted by untrained attendants, highlighting gaps in remote and underserved areas.

The survey shows the average expenditure per delivery at Tk 22,677, of which Tk 13,060 is spent on delivery alone. Average maternal care expenditure is Tk 26,360 in urban areas and Tk 21,554 in rural areas.

SEE PAGE 9 COL 4

## Politics turning into a money-making space

### Speakers tell seminar

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Politics has now become a space for business interests where holding public office almost guarantees the accumulation of wealth, said Badiul Alam Majumdar, secretary of Shushashoner Jonno Nagorik yesterday.

Speaking at a seminar at the Cirdap auditorium, he warned that if politicians continue to use state power for personal gain, the path towards democratic progress will remain uncertain.

The seminar was organised to mark the launch of a new platform called Voice Network. "Elected representatives are meant to serve the people. But when they end up serving themselves, citizens may once again be forced to rise," Badiul said.

He also presented asset records of the mayors elected in the 2008 polls in Rajshahi, Khulna, Sylhet and Barishal city corporations. He said the Khulna city mayor's wealth increased by more than 14,500 percent within five years of taking office, Barishal mayor by 5,917 percent, Rajshahi mayor by 2,308 percent and Sylhet mayor by 608 percent over the same period.

Badiul described the electoral landscape as unclean and said a kind of democracy had emerged that could be bought with money.

Prof Md Sahabul Haque of SUST delivered the keynote paper, while the session was chaired by Prof Md Jasim Uddin of Dhaka University.

### AT A GLANCE

- Warning of increased use of illegal money, arms ahead of polls
- Allegations that recent appointments of DCs, SPs favour a particular party
- Speakers say voting rights now in ICU and must be restored
- Newly launched Voice Network unites 21 polls-monitoring groups

BNP Chairperson's adviser Syed Moazzem Hossain Alal urged election observers to examine whether it would constitute a violation of the RPO if advisers to the interim government contest the upcoming polls.

Former EC additional secretary Jesmin Tuli warned that use of illegal money and arms was likely to rise ahead of the next polls and called on the government and the EC to take early measures.

Ehsanul Mahbub Zubair, assistant secretary general of Jamaat-e-Islami, said recent appointments of election officials, including DCs and SPs, had raised questions about whether the EC was leaning towards a particular political party.

Saiful Haque, general secretary of Biplobi Workers Party, said any attempt at electoral manipulation would mark a dark chapter for the country.

Ariful Islam Adib, senior joint convener of National Citizen Party, said people's voting rights had effectively ended up in the ICU in recent years and restoring those rights was now essential.

Rashed Khan, general secretary of Gono Odhikar Parishad, said those aligned with fascism and those who contested past dummy elections must be prevented from participating in the upcoming polls.

Organisers said the Voice Network brings together 21 registered election-monitoring organisations.

**ডাচ-বাংলা ব্যাংক-এ**

**CRM-এ**

**রিয়েল টাইমে টাকা জমা দেয়া যায় যেকোনো সময়ে**



**CRM মেশিনে কার্ড প্রবেশ করিয়ে PIN দিন**

**মেনু থেকে Cash Deposit সিলেক্ট করুন**

**CRM ট্রে-তে টাকা রেখে Confirm করুন**

**টাকার পরিমাণ নিশ্চিত করলেই জমা সম্পন্ন হবে**

**সাথে সাথেই মোবাইলে পেয়ে যাবেন কনফার্মেশন এসএমএস**



**ডাচ-বাংলা ব্যাংক**  
আপনার বিশ্বস্ত সহযোগী





## Five more die of dengue, 636 get hospitalised

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

At least five dengue patients died while 636 others were hospitalised in the 24 hours till 8:00am yesterday.

According to the DGHS, among the deaths, three were reported from DSCC while one each from Chattogram and Khulna.

The total number of deaths this year now stands at 382, while total cases rose to 94,402.

Currently, 1,995 dengue patients are undergoing treatment at hospitals.



PHOTO: TITU DAS

A farmer rows a small boat along the Arial Kha River on a chilly morning, carrying his harvested Aman paddy to its destination. The photo was taken in the Shayestabadom area of Sadar upazila in Barishal recently.

## SAINT MARTIN'S ISLAND Tourist season with overnight stays begins



STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Cox's Bazar

Tourist season on Saint Martin's Island begins today and will continue for two months until the end of January next year.

During this period, visitors will be allowed to stay overnight on the island.

Passenger vessels will start operating on the Cox's Bazar Saint Martin route from today. Ship operators said up to 2,000 tourists will be able to travel daily.

Hossainul Islam Bahadur, general secretary of the Sea Cruise Operator Owners' Association of Bangladesh, said, "Only three cruise ships will leave for Saint Martin's at 6:00am on Monday morning. The daily quota of 2,000 passengers had not yet been filled."

Although the island opened to tourists on November 1, ship operations remained suspended as visitors showed little interest due to restrictions on overnight stays.

Shibli Azim Kashemi, president of the Saint Martin's Hotel and Resort Owners' Association, said tourist numbers are expected to rise after December 15, when

annual examinations end at schools.

Sujon Ghosh, a tourist, said they arrived in Cox's Bazar yesterday and were checking ticket availability for the island. "The staff told us tickets are still available, so we are happy we can go tomorrow," he said.

Md Sohel, a tourism businessman, said, "News of tourist season finally beginning has lifted our spirits."

Jamir Uddin, director of the Department of Environment's Cox's Bazar office, said ships will be closely monitored during passenger movement and no more than 2,000 tourists will be allowed each day.

The district administration will strictly enforce the government's 12-point instruction to protect the island's biodiversity, including regulation of tourist schedules and numbers, a bar on lighting, loud noise and barbeque parties on the beach at night, restriction on entry to key forest and collection and sale of key fruits, and a bar on activities harmful to marine turtles, birds, corals, mud crabs, shells or other biodiversity.

## Health assistants to continue demo

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Health assistants will continue their indefinite work stoppage after a meeting with the health authorities ended without any progress yesterday.

Several thousand health assistants, under the banner of the Bangladesh Health Assistant Association, began a sit-in on Saturday morning and stayed overnight at the Central Shaheed Minar in Dhaka to press home their six-point demand, including upgrading their posts to the 14th grade from 16th.

Fazlul Haque Chowdhury, member secretary of the Bangladesh Health Assistant Association Central Coordination Council, said, "We will also spend the night here tonight. The health adviser had called us for a meeting, but he did not meet us. Rather, an additional and joint secretary heard our points but could not give any solutions. We will continue our work stoppage."

Health assistants serve as frontline public health workers, particularly in rural and hard-to-reach areas, conducting routine vaccination sessions among other responsibilities.

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For more information :

**Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh**  
Initiative to Make Bangladesh Railways Tobacco Free (IMBRTFP) 3rd Phase  
Ministry of Railways  
16, Abdul Gani Road, Dhaka-1000

Memo No. 54.00.0000.009.11.001.25(P-3)-09 Date: November 27, 2025

**Request for Expression of Interest (REOI) For Enforcement & Monitoring (Consultant)**

Ministry of Railways (MoR) is implementing a Tobacco Control Program with the financial assistance of "Vital Strategies" MoR is seeking qualified candidate for the position of Enforcement & Monitoring (Consultant) to develop and implement its tobacco control initiative. He/She will monitor the tobacco control enforcement mechanism and project strategies in collaboration with the project team of MoR and the relevant government department for successful implementation of this initiative.

2. "Initiative to Make Bangladesh Railways Tobacco Free-3rd Phase" project now invites eligible individuals for the post of **Enforcement & Monitoring (Consultant)** to submit their application for the post mention below:

S.L.	Post Name & Position	Educational qualification & experiences	Job responsibilities
1.	Enforcement & Monitoring (Consultant) Position-1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Post Graduate degree in any discipline;</li> <li>MBA degree will be considered as an additional qualification;</li> <li>Minimum 10 years of relevant work experiences;</li> <li>Age Minimum 45 years to maximum 65 years;</li> <li>Salary-Negotiable;</li> <li>Project Period: 1st September 2025 to February 2027.</li> </ul> <p><b>Note: Smokers do not need to apply.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Monitor the implementation of the "Smoking &amp; Tobacco Products Usage (Control) law" at railway stations and trains;</li> <li>Facilitate station managers in planning and implementing the related provisions of the Tobacco Control (TC) law;</li> <li>Prepare and submit monthly, quarterly and yearly technical and financial report to donor;</li> <li>Develop monitoring checklists, conduct, surveys and compliance checks to track progress and effectiveness of law implementation;</li> <li>Design data collection instruments and conduct field visits to ensure data quality;</li> <li>Provide technical support to ensure programs meet objectives and stakeholders informed;</li> <li>Perform other related duties as providing by the supervisor or competent authority.</li> </ul>

3. The Project Director invites eligible applicants to indicate their interest in providing the services. Interested applicants are invited to provide information indicating that they are qualified and competent to perform the services with a complete CV having one copy of recent Passport size photograph (with relevant documents) and by this REOI.

4. Expression of interest must be submitted by 3:00pm on 15 December, 2025 in sealed envelope to the office of the undersigned and be clearly marked as "Expression of Interest for the position" on the top of the envelope.

5. Working with the experience of coordination in the field of Tobacco Control will be an added qualification.

6. The Procuring Entity (PE) reserves the right to accept or reject any or all EOIs without assigning any reason whatsoever.

**Mir Alamgir Hossain**  
Project Director (Joint Secretary)  
Initiative to Make Bangladesh Railways Tobacco Free (IMBRTFP) 3rd Phase  
Ministry of Railways  
GD-2593 Room No. 728, 16, Abdul Gani Road, Rail Bhaban, Dhaka-1000

# Teachers start work abstention, boycott classes, exams

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Government schools across the country may face disruptions from today, with secondary school teachers beginning a full-day work abstention and primary teachers planning to boycott annual examinations, demanding changes to their pay scale and service benefits.

Secondary teachers under the banner of the Bangladesh Government Secondary Teachers' Association had earlier announced the suspension of all academic activities, including the ongoing annual examinations.

Association leaders said if their demands are met, they will hold the remaining exams on weekly holidays on Friday and Saturday and publish results within December. Otherwise, the abstention will continue.

Their four-point demand includes bringing the entry-level assistant teacher post under the BCS (General Education) cadre, issuing a gazette to establish a Directorate of Secondary Education, prompt appointments to vacant posts, completion of stalled promotions and postings, approval of due time-scale and selection grade benefits in line with a Supreme Court verdict, and restoration of the pre-2015 system under which assistant teachers received two to three increments in advance.

Currently, they receive salaries under the 10th grade of the national pay scale, with a basic salary starting at around Tk 16,000.

Earlier yesterday, secondary teachers observed a sit-in in front of the Directorate of Secondary and Higher Education for the second consecutive day. In a statement, the association said since their demands remained unmet, they declared continuous work abstention from today.

Meanwhile, a section of primary teachers under the banner of Prathomik Shikhhok Dabi Bastabayan Parishad yesterday announced that they would boycott the annual exams scheduled for today in continuation of their indefinite work abstention. If their three-point demand remains unmet till tonight, the boycott will continue.

Also yesterday, a letter signed by AK Mohammad Shamsul Ahsan, director (policy and operation) of the Directorate of Primary Education, instructed all divisional deputy directors and district primary education officers to ensure that annual exams at government primary schools are conducted as planned and warned that any irregularity or negligence would lead to action.

Primary teachers are demanding elevation to the 10th grade, resolution of complications over higher-grade benefits after 10 and 16 years of service, and 100 percent departmental promotion from assistant teacher to head teacher.

Government primary school assistant teachers are currently placed in Grade 13 with a basic salary of about Tk 11,000.



FILE PHOTO

**Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh**  
Medical Education and Family Welfare Division  
Directorate General of Medical Education  
Office of the Principal  
Manikganj Medical College  
Manikganj-1800

Memo No. 59.14.3056.150.07.002.25.43 Date: 30.11.2025

**e-GP: Tender Notice (OTM-NCT: Physical Service: Outsourcing)**

The tender notice for [Procurement of Outsourcing Service (SR-01); e-GP Tender ID No. 1171521]; is published in e-GP website.

This is an online tender, where only e-Tender will be accepted in the e-GP Portal and no offline/hard copy will be accepted. To submit e-Tender, registration on e-GP System ([www.eprocure.gov.bd](http://www.eprocure.gov.bd)) is mandatory. For more details contact e-GP help desk 16575.

**Dr. Md. Abu Bakar Siddique**  
Principal (Acting)  
Manikganj Medical College  
Manikganj-1800

GD-2592

**পাওয়ার গ্রিড বাংলাদেশ পিএলসি**  
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স্মারক নং- ২৭.২১.০০০০.৬২৪.১১.১০২.২৫.৮৩৭ তারিখঃ ৩০/১১/২০২৫খ্রিঃ

**আউটসোর্সিং প্রক্রিয়ায় সেবা গ্রহণের বিজ্ঞপ্তি**

পাওয়ার গ্রিড বাংলাদেশ পিএলসি এর অধীন গ্রিড সার্কেল, ঢাকা (উত্তর) দপ্তরের আওতাধীন অমিনবাজার ৪০০/২৩০/১৩২ কেডি গ্রিড উপকেন্দ্রের জাইভার পদে আউটসোর্সিং (Outsourcing) প্রক্রিয়ায় সেবা গ্রহণ নিতিমালা, ২০২৫ অনুযায়ী স্থানীয় প্রতিষ্ঠানের (সম্পূর্ণ অস্থায়ী ভিত্তিতে) নিকট হতে সরাসরি দরখাস্ত আহ্বান করা যাচ্ছে।

১। জাইভার বেতনঃ টাকা ১৭,৯৯২/- ক্যাটাগরি-২	০১ (এক)টি পাস/সেম্যান হতে হবে। তবে, অভিজ্ঞ প্রার্থীদের অগ্রাধিকার দেওয়া হবে।	অষ্টম শ্রেণী	আউটসোর্সিং (Outsourcing) প্রক্রিয়ায় সেবা গ্রহণ নিতিমালা, ২০২৫ অনুযায়ী বাৎসরিক ০২টি উৎসব ভাতা (০১ মাসের বেতনের অর্ধেক অর্থাৎ ৫০% হারে) এবং বৈশাখী প্রদোদনা (০১ মাসের বেতনের ২০% হারে) এবং অতিরিক্ত কর্মঘণ্টা কাজের জন্য টাকা ৮০ হারে সর্বমোট ১০০ ঘণ্টার মজুরী প্রাপ্ত হবেন।
আউটসোর্সিং প্রক্রিয়ায় সেবা গ্রহণের বিষয়ে বিজ্ঞপ্তি জানতে ভিজিট করুন <a href="https://powergrid.gov.bd">https://powergrid.gov.bd</a>			

মীর মোতাহার হোসেন  
তত্ত্বাবধায়ক প্রকৌশলী, গ্রিড সার্কেল, ঢাকা (উত্তর)

**Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh**  
Road Transport and Highways Division  
**Dhaka Mass Transit Company Limited**  
Metrorail Bhaban, Uttara Depot, Sonargaon Janapath  
Sector -16, Diabari Uttara, Dhaka-1230  
[www.dmtcl.gov.bd](http://www.dmtcl.gov.bd)

Memo No. 35.05.0000.022.07.038.25-1458 Date: 30.11.2025

**e-Tender Notice: OTM**

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

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 guideline are available in the National e-GP system portal and from e-GP Help desk ([helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd](mailto:helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd)).

Sl. No.	Package No.	Description of Goods	Tender ID No.	Tender Publishing (Date & Time)	Tender Closing (Date & Time)	Method of Tender
01	DMTCL/GR-03/2025-26	Supply of MRT Pass for Dhaka Metro Rail under DMTCL. This MRT Pass will be used for entry and exit purposes at the metro station by the passengers.	1171017	01-December-2025, 15:00	22-December-2025, 15:00	OTM

**Mir Alamgir Hossain**  
Project Director (Joint Secretary)  
Initiative to Make Bangladesh Railways Tobacco Free (IMBRTFP) 3rd Phase  
Ministry of Railways  
GD-2593 Room No. 728, 16, Abdul Gani Road, Rail Bhaban, Dhaka-1000

**(A.K.M. Sarwar Alamgir)**  
Deputy General Manager (Store & Procurement)  
Dhaka Mass Transit Company Limited

GD-2601

**Request for Quotation: Procurement of CRM Machines**

BRAC Bank PLC. delivers a full array of banking services to individuals and businesses through a network of 191 Branches, 107 Sub-branches, 330 ATMs, 446 SME Unit Offices and 1,120 Agent Banking Outlets across the country. The bank is currently seeking potential vendor(s) for the procurement of CRM Machines.

A Request for Quotation (RFQ) for the submission of Technical Offers is hereby issued for this purpose. The RFQ, along with details of the bidding process, can be found on the bank's website: <https://www.bracbank.com/en/page/e-tender>

**Interested and eligible bidders are requested to submit their Technical Offers as per the mentioned bidding process.**

**BRAC BANK**  
আম্রু অফিস

**বাংলাদেশ রেড ক্রিসেন্ট সোসাইটি**  
জাতীয় সদর দপ্তর  
৬৮৪-৬৮৬, রেড ক্রিসেন্ট সড়ক, বড় মগবাজার, ঢাকা-১২১৭

**অডিটর নিয়োগ বিজ্ঞপ্তি**

বাংলাদেশ রেড ক্রিসেন্ট সোসাইটির ২০২৫ সনের জন্য নির্দেশিত কার্যালয়সমূহে Physical Inventory সহ হিসাব সমূহ অডিটের জন্য আগ্রহী চার্টার্ড অ্যাকাউন্ট্যান্টস ফর্ম থেকে আগামী ০৯ ডিসেম্বর ২০২৫ তারিখের মধ্যে অফিস চলাকালীন সময়ে সোসাইটির মহাসচিব দপ্তরে সীলদালা সহ আবেদনপত্র জমা দেয়ার জন্য অনুরোধ করা যাচ্ছে।

ক) জাতীয় সদর দপ্তর।  
২) চট্টগ্রাম বেস ডিপো অফিস।  
৩) দেশের বিভিন্ন স্থানে মাদ্রাসাতল সমূহ চট্টগ্রাম, সিলেট, বরিশাল, দিনাজপুর, নেত্রকোনা (তেলিগাতি), চাঁদপুর, গাজীপুর (কালিগাছ), মাদ্রাসা ও ঢাকা (বালাবাজার)।  
৪) সোসাইটির ৬৮টি জেলা / সিটি ইউনিট।  
৫) সোসাইটির ৬৮টি ইউনিটের Consolidate Report.  
৬) রেড ক্রিসেন্ট চক্কু ক্রিনিকাল ফ্ল্যাডাঙ্গা ও অফিসঘরে।  
৭) সোসাইটির প্রকল্প সমূহ ( জাতীয় সদর দপ্তর ও ঢাকার বাহিরে)।  
৮) রেড ক্রিসেন্ট রক্ত কেন্দ্র সমূহ চট্টগ্রাম, সিলেট, রাজশাহী, মাদ্রাসা, যশোর, দিনাজপুর, নাটোর, সোলাপালা ও ঢাকা।  
৯) সোসাইটির টাক গ্রভিডেট ফান্ড।  
১০) সোসাইটির টাক ওয়েলফেয়ার ফান্ড।  
১১) সোসাইটির সলিডারিটি ফান্ড।  
১২) BDRCS Staff Gratuity Fund হিসাবে কর্মকর্তা/কর্মচারীদের Gratuity বাবদ সোসাইটির দায় নিরূপন করা।

খ) হলি ফ্যামিলি রেড ক্রিসেন্ট মেডিকেল কলেজ হাসপাতাল, ১নং ইফটান গার্ডেন রোড, (ঐশ্বর্য গুদাম, সাধারণ গুদাম, লন্ড্রি ও শিউন, খাদ্য ও অন্যান্য) ঢাকা।  
১) হলি ফ্যামিলি রেড ক্রিসেন্ট মেডিকেল কলেজ, ১নং ইফটান গার্ডেন রোড (সাধারণ গুদাম ও অন্যান্য) ঢাকা।  
২) হলি ফ্যামিলি রেড ক্রিসেন্ট মেডিকেল কলেজ এর টাক গ্রভিডেট ফান্ড।  
৩) হলি ফ্যামিলি রেড ক্রিসেন্ট নার্সিং কলেজ, ১নং ইফটান গার্ডেন রোড, ঢাকা।

বর্ষিক অডিটের জন্য অডিট ফর্মের বিস্তারিত তথ্য ও অডিট কি ক্রমিক নং ক,খ,গ ও ঘ পৃথকভাবে অর্ধের পরিমাণ (ভ্যাট ও ট্যাক্সসহ) উল্লেখপূর্ণক দাখিল করতে হবে। অগ্রদায় নিম্নোক্ত তথ্য ও প্রয়োজনীয় ডকুমেন্টস সংযুক্ত করা প্রয়োজন-  
License from ICAB, Legal status (Partnership or Single), Valid Trade license, Income Tax certificate, Tin certificate and VAT registration certificate, Practicing experience, HR capacity, Previous experience in BDRCS, Proposed team composition (Qualification & experience), অসম্পূর্ণ প্রস্তাব গ্রহণযোগ্য নহে এবং কর্তৃপক্ষ যে কোন কারণ দর্শানো ব্যতিরেকে দরপত্র বাতিল করার ক্ষমতা সংরক্ষণ করেন।  
ড. কবির মোঃ আশরাফ আলম, এনভিসি মহাসচিব



FLOOD, LANDSLIDE

Tropical storm death toll tops 600 in Southeast Asia

Over 4m people affected

REUTERS, Jakarta

The death toll mounted to over 600 from floods and landslides caused by torrential rains across three countries in Southeast Asia, officials said yesterday, as relief efforts for tens of thousands of displaced people continued over the weekend.

Indonesia, Malaysia and Thailand faced large-scale devastation after a rare tropical storm formed in the Malacca Strait fuelling heavy rains and wind gusts for a week. There were 435 dead in Indonesia, 170 in Thailand, and three deaths reported in Malaysia.

Rescue and relief officials in the Southeast Asian countries were still trying to get access to many flood-hit areas yesterday even as flood waters receded and tens of thousands of people were evacuated across the three



People with their belongings wade through a flooded street after heavy rainfall in Wellampitiya on the outskirts of Colombo yesterday. Sri Lankan authorities battled rising floodwaters in parts of the capital after the powerful Cyclone Ditwah left a trail of destruction, killing at least 334 people across the country. PHOTO: AFP

Israeli fighter jets pound east of Rafah

4 Palestinians, holed up in Gaza tunnels, killed

AGENCIES

Israeli fighter jets yesterday carried out strikes east of Rafah in Gaza, while forces demolished structures east of Khan Younis.

The army said it had killed four Palestinians coming out of the tunnels in Rafah. Dozens of Hamas fighters are holed up in southern Gaza's tunnels, underneath areas controlled by the Israeli military, reports AFP.

Israeli naval vessels fired shells towards the city's coastline, local sources and witnesses told the Anadolu news agency. Israeli artillery shelled eastern Khan Younis, while helicopters fired on buildings amid demolitions in the area.

An air raid hit east of the Bureij refugee camp in Deir el-Balah, central Gaza.

» Israeli naval vessels fire shells towards Gaza's coastline

» Qatar say Israel must not block 2nd phase of truce

Venezuela blasts Trump airspace threat

AGENCIES

Caracas on Saturday slammed US President Donald Trump's warning that Venezuelan airspace should be considered closed, calling it a "colonialist threat."

"Venezuela denounces and condemns the colonialist threat that seeks to affect the sovereignty of its airspace, constituting yet another extravagant, illegal and unjustified aggression against the Venezuelan people," the Foreign Ministry said.

Trump administration is piling pressure on Venezuela, with a military deployment in the Caribbean that includes largest aircraft carrier.

Syed Wasif Islam

FROM PAGE 2

Over the years, Syed Wasif Islam has visited more than 100 countries for dawah (invitation to Islam) activities and is widely respected as a global Islamic preacher and an influential senior figure within the movement.

This year's Alami Mashwara is being held in Indonesia instead of Bangladesh, as the global gathering could not take place at the World Ijtima

Unfairly treated

FROM PAGE 12

retaliation between 2009 and August 4, 2024, according to a statement from the chief adviser's press wing.

"When I assigned you this responsibility, I thought perhaps a few irregularities had taken place, but the complete picture you have presented is truly frightening. It is far beyond imagination," Yunus said, thanking the committee for its professionalism and impartiality.

Lt Gen (ret'd) Abdul Hafiz, the committee chairman and special assistant to the chief adviser on defence and national unity development, and members Maj Gen (ret'd) Muhammad Shams-ul-Huda, Maj Gen (ret'd) Sheikh Pasha Habib Uddin, rear admiral (ret'd) Mohammad Shafiul Azam, and air vice marshal (ret'd) Muhammad Shafiqat Ali, handed the report to the chief adviser.

The committee received 733 applications and recommended 145.

Abdul Hafiz said the committee held its first meeting on August 19, 2025, and invited applications by September 21, 2025.

He noted that service boards found no record of moral misconduct or disciplinary punishment in the dossiers of those recommended, except in a few cases. Recommendations were based on board findings, additional information, and interviews with applicants.

The inquiry found that six officers were subjected to enforced disappearances

ground in Tongi due to ongoing opposition to Maulana Saad Kandhalvi's presence in Bangladesh, the press release said.

It added that approximately 1,500 responsible members and elders of Tabligh Jamaat from various regions of Bangladesh are currently attending the Ijtima in Jakarta.

During the concluding session yesterday, several countries received new members, including Bangladesh.

for periods ranging from one to eight years due to relatives' political affiliations or alleged militancy.

One retired officer was killed after being framed in a fabricated militancy case, while his wife was detained without trial twice for six years, along with their one-year-old child.

Officers critical of government inaction during February 25, 2009, BDR carnage were tortured after being implicated in the Sheikh Fazle Noor Taposh murder attempt case, which the commission termed "fabricated".

The inquiry also found that five DGFI officers from the 1/11 caretaker government were dismissed on false allegations or without charges.

Quoting the report, the CA's press wing said officers assigned to question the prime minister at a darbar after the BDR massacre were dismissed without defence when the session turned chaotic.

It added that four junior lieutenants were dismissed as alleged militants or simply for practising religious rituals.

According to the report, 114 army officers were recommended for normal retirement, promotion, pre-retirement promotion, arrears, and other allowances, with four recommended for reinstatement. Nineteen navy and 12 air force officers were recommended for similar benefits.

Fish stocks in the Bay drop nearly 80%

FROM PAGE 1

the Bay; that number has now risen to 273.

He said the decline in the number and size of commercially important fish is alarming, and urged the government to reduce the number of commercial trawlers to prevent further damage. Ecosystem disruption and environmental degradation have also contributed to the decline, he added.

The survey was conducted from August 21 to September 21 across Bangladesh's entire exclusive economic zone of 118,813 sq km.

It included oceanographic measurements, fisheries trawling, plankton and jellyfish studies, and microplastic sampling. The work is part of the EAF-Nansen Programme, carried out using the research vessel Dr Fridtjof Nansen.

The 2019 Department of Fisheries report stated that the current management system allows excessive and increasing fishing pressure, and called for urgent steps

to stop fleet growth and gradually reduce total fleet size.

Preliminary results from the new survey recorded 65 marine species for the first time in Bangladesh, including five possibly new to science.

According to the ministry data, the Bay of Bengal has 475 species of fish, 36 species of shrimp, five species of lobster, more than 15 species of crab, five species of turtles and 13 species of coral.

Abdullah Al Mamun said researchers have sent samples to a laboratory in South Africa for further analysis.

The survey also found that jellyfish, once more abundant in deep-sea areas, are now appearing in much larger numbers along the coast.

For the first time, the presence of Skipjack tuna and other tuna species has been scientifically confirmed within Bangladesh's exclusive economic zone.

Skipjack tuna were caught by trawls and hook-and-line, and scientists also observed tuna schools inside the exclusive economic zone. Skipjack tuna is a small, highly migratory species found in tropical and subtropical oceans worldwide, known for being the most abundant commercial tuna. Of the country's 20 major fish species, nine were commercially viable for harvest in 2018, but that number has now fallen to just five, according to the survey.

During the survey, 34 CTD stations were completed, and 275 water samples were collected for pH, alkalinity, and nutrient analysis. Plankton sampling at 32 stations identified 9,794 fish larvae -- including tuna larvae -- and 418 microplastics.

Fisheries and Livestock Adviser Farida Akhter said due to overfishing, illegal and unregulated fishing, and the use of harmful nets, the marine fish stock is declining, which is a matter of serious concern.

She said out of 273 industrial trawlers, 72 are using technology, but since it is not being used properly, bycatch and wastage are increasing.

In the Bay of Bengal, oxygen levels are low in some areas and high in others, there is a high concentration of microplastics, and an abnormal proliferation of jellyfish, she added.

These warning signs clearly indicate that Bangladesh's marine environment is facing serious risks, she mentioned.

She urged that the issuance of licenses for industrial trawlers be strictly limited and strict control be imposed on trawler-based fishing.

The adviser further said after receiving the final report in mid-December, the government will hold meetings with all relevant stakeholders and then take the necessary measures.

GOVERNMENT OF THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF BANGLADESH  
MINISTRY OF HOUSING AND PUBLIC WORKS  
URBAN DEVELOPMENT DIRECTORATE  
Barishal Regional Office,  
834 Police line Road, Barishal  
Website: [www.udd.gov.bd](http://www.udd.gov.bd)

Memo No. 25.45.1000.000.104.07.0003.25.820

Date: 30, November 25

Invitation of Tenders

GOVERNMENT OF THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF BANGLADESH				
1	Ministry/Division	Ministry of Housing and Public Works (MoHPW).		
2	Agency	Urban Development Directorate (UDD)		
3	Procuring Entity Name	Project Director, "Preparation of Strategic Plan for Barishal Metropolitan Area" Project		
4	Procuring Entity Code	1320401		
5	Procuring Entity District	Barishal		
6	Invitation for	Hiring of Vehicle		
7	Invitation Ref No	25.45.1000.000.104.07.0003.25.820		
8	Date	30, November 25		
KEY INFORMATION				
9	Procurement Method	Time Based		
FUNDING INFORMATION				
10	Budget and Source of Funds	Development Budget (GOB)		GoB
11	Development Partners (If Applicable)	N/A		
PARTICULAR INFORMATION				
12	Project/Program Code	222020600		
13	Project/Program Name	Preparation of Strategic Plan for Barishal Metropolitan Area		
14	Tender Package No.	Vehicle-01		
15	Tender Package Name	Hiring of Vehicle for the Project Work		
16	Tender Publication Date	01, December, 25		
17	Tender last Selling Date	11, December, 25		
18	Tender Closing Date and Time	14, December 25; Time: 10:30 AM		
19	Tender Opening Date and Time	14, December 25; Time: 11:30 AM		
20	Name & Address of the Office(s)	Office of the Senior Planner, Urban Development Directorate, Barishal Regional Office, 834 Police Line Road, Barishal		
INFORMATION FOR TENDERER				
21	Eligibility of Tenderer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Tenderers shall have the legal capacity to enter into the Contract under the Applicable Law.</li><li>Tenderers shall be enrolled in the relevant professional or trade organisations registered in Bangladesh.</li><li>Tenderers shall have fulfilled its obligations to pay taxes under the provisions of laws and regulations of Bangladesh</li></ul>		
22	Brief Description of Services	Hiring of vehicle (One nos) as monthly contractual basis with fuel, toll, parking, maintenance etc.		
23	Price of Tender Document (TK)	1500 TK		
20	Package No	Identification of Package	Location	Tender Security Amount (TK)
	Vehicle-01	-	Barishal Metropolitan Area	60000.00Tk
				Completion Time in Weeks/Months
				20 Months
PROCURING ENTITY DETAILS				
21	Name of Official Inviting Tender	Asaduzzaman		
22	Designation of Official Inviting Tender	Senior Planner Urban Development Directorate, Barishal Regional Office		
23	Address of Official Inviting Tender	Office of the Senior Planner, Urban Development Directorate, Barishal Regional Office, 834 Police Line Road, Barishal		
24	Contact details of Official Inviting Tender	Phone no: 01732122258		
25	The Procuring entity reserves the right to reject all the Tenders or annul the Tender proceedings			

GD-2598

(Asaduzzaman)  
Project Director  
"Preparation of Strategic Plan for Barishal Metropolitan Area"  
Project  
Urban Development Directorate,  
Barishal Regional Office, Barishal

**Dhaka South City Corporation**  
Office of the Executive Engineer  
Waste Management Department  
Nagar Bhaban, Dhaka  
[www.dscc.gov.bd](http://www.dscc.gov.bd)  
**e-Tender Notice**

Memo No.: 46.207.000.12.05.8156.2025

Date: 30.11.2025

This is online Tender, where only e-Tender will be accepted in e-GP portal and offline/hard copies will not be accepted. To submit e-Tender, please register on e-GP system portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>).

e-Tender is invited in e-GP portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) by Executive Engineer, Waste Management Department, Dhaka South City Corporation for the procurement of:

Sl. No.	Tender ID & Package No.	Name of works	Publishing Date & Time	Last Selling Date & Time	Tender Opening Date & Time
1.	1179006 WR03/WMD/Beautification /FY2025-26	Renovation works with Preservation, Beautification and health awareness Graffiti/Art works on the footpath adjacent to the road in front of Dhaka Medical College & Hospital under Dhaka South City Corporation.	30.11.2025 22:00	11.12.2025 13.00	11.12.2025 17:00

ডিএসসিসি/পিআরডি/১০৫/২০২৫-২০২৬

(Md. Ahsan Habib)  
Executive Engineer  
Waste Management Department  
Dhaka South City Corporation.  
Telephone No.: +8802-47123341  
E-mail: [xenwm@dscc.gov.bd](mailto:xenwm@dscc.gov.bd)

GD-2604



## Salinity’s vicious toll on women’s health

A crisis that can no longer be ignored

The devastating consequences of salinity on the lives and livelihoods of people in the coastal areas are well known. A recent investigation by *The Daily Star* has revealed an equally alarming and often-overlooked dimension of this crisis: its brutal toll on women's health. Across Khulna and Satkhira, women are suffering from severe reproductive and skin-related conditions that are altering the course of their lives, ushering in early menopause, forcing hysterectomies, and increasing the risk of cancer. Many endure chronic infections in silence, often left untreated for years due to stigma, poor access to healthcare services, or geographical inaccessibility.

Women engaged in shrimp farming spend hours standing waist-deep in saline water to catch shrimp fry to support their families. They drink salty water, wash and bathe with it, and work in it daily. The results are chronic skin diseases, urinary tract infections, and serious reproductive health complications. This is also supported by recent data. According to a 2024 Journal of Migration and Health study, 64.8 percent of women in Mongla and 53.8 percent in Shyamnagar, Satkhira, reported inflammation or infections of the vagina, uterus, fallopian tubes or ovaries. Nearly one-third struggle to maintain menstrual hygiene. Severe skin problems affect 92 percent of women in Shyamnagar and nearly 70 percent in Mongla.

An icddr,b analysis covering 2012-2017 further showed that women living near the coastline face a 1.3 times higher risk of miscarriage than those in higher-elevation areas. Hypertension, exacerbated by salinity, is quite common, increasing the likelihood of pre-eclampsia in pregnant women. Despite these problems, however, successive governments have ignored the crisis of salinity in coastal areas. Unregulated shrimp farming has contaminated soil and water, devastated agricultural land, and made safe drinking water increasingly scarce. The health fallout—especially for women and girls—has now become impossible to overlook.

We urge the authorities to treat this as a public health emergency. While long-term policy reforms, including strict regulation of shrimp farming, are essential, immediate interventions cannot wait. Access to safe drinking water and sanitation must be ensured through investments in rainwater harvesting, desalination technologies, and other measures, prioritising the most affected areas. Health services must also be expanded in remote areas by establishing mobile clinics, deploying more female health workers, and subsidising diagnostic and reproductive health services. Large-scale awareness must be launched on the risks of prolonged saline exposure, the importance of hygiene, and the need to seek timely medical attention. It is equally important that, besides government authorities, political parties too help in addressing salinity as both a development and public health priority in these regions.

## Time to ensure justice in trafficking cases

New law responds to concerns over alarming acquittal rates

We welcome the government's approval of a new ordinance that aims to prevent human trafficking and the smuggling of migrant workers by introducing comprehensive remedial measures. At a time when the overwhelming majority of such cases end in acquittal, the initiative signals a long-overdue recognition that the country's legal and institutional framework has failed some of its most vulnerable citizens. Updating the existing law to align with international standards and clearly define offences related to migrant smuggling—long legally undefined despite its widespread occurrence—is a step in the right direction. Of course, law alone is not enough. But having a proper law can enable effective investigation, prosecution, and ultimately justice for victims.

A review of official case-disposal records paints a grim picture of how trafficking cases have fared so far. In 2020, the courts disposed of 14 cases, and 13 of them ended in acquittal. In 2021, both disposed cases ended in acquittal. In 2022, all 34 disposed cases met the same fate. The volume of disposed cases surged in 2023 but the acquittal rate remained disturbingly similar, with 415 of 436 cases ending in acquittal. In 2024, out of 363 cases 342 cases resulted in acquittal. Even the first six months of 2025 followed the same pattern, with 132 of 141 disposed cases ending in acquittal. These figures do not suggest the absence of crime, but rather the weakness of investigations, the confusion in legal categorisation, and the inability of our system to hold perpetrators to account.

The new law intends to address these gaps. The decision to introduce a separate chapter on the smuggling of migrants (SOM) is particularly noteworthy as an average of 95 percent of SOM cases ended in acquittal over the last four and a half years, largely due to miscategorisation. It also addresses the growing use of online platforms for “job recruitment” by traffickers, while limiting the influence of the accused by allowing the freezing of bank accounts, seizing of assets, and restricting of travel during investigation, with court approval of course. Meanwhile, the provision of improved witness protection and safeguards to prevent victims from being pressured into withdrawing complaints could strengthen cases that previously fell apart under intimidation.

However, as we have already noted, law alone is insufficient. Many of those who fall victim to traffickers or smugglers do so out of desperation, poverty, and a lack of safe, legal migration pathways. So if the ordinance is to achieve its stated objective, it must be accompanied by robust implementation, proper training for law enforcement and prosecutors, and sustained awareness campaigns in high-risk communities. Only then can we succeed in suppressing human trafficking.

### THIS DAY IN HISTORY

#### Rosa Park refuses to give up her bus seat

On this day in 1955, in violation of segregation laws in Montgomery, Alabama, Rosa Parks refused to surrender her bus seat to a white passenger and was arrested, sparking a 381-day bus boycott led by Martin Luther King, Jr.

# Are our schools inherently designed to fail?



Dr Manzoor Ahmed is professor emeritus at BRAC University, chair of Bangladesh ECD Network (BEN), and adviser to the Campaign for Popular Education (CAMPE). Views expressed in this article are the author's own.

MANZOOR AHMED

That our school education is in disarray is not news. It has been in public discussion, though it captures the media's attention whenever a new instance of its dysfunction is revealed. However, a way to address the problems and move towards better outcomes remains elusive.

The most recent Multiple Indicators Cluster Survey (MICS) by the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics, with Unicef's support, has drawn public attention again to the woes of the secondary education system. According to MICS, only 44 percent of the secondary school-age children complete secondary education up to class ten. In other words, more than half of our young people do not have a secondary education, though 84 percent of children complete primary education. The report also shows income-based, gender-based and geographical disparities.

The statistics in the survey only mention children's participation in school, not what they learn or whether they acquire the knowledge and competence expected at primary and secondary level education.

That the majority of our young people are not earning a secondary education qualification and a large gap exists in children's education opportunities between primary and secondary stages, is shocking. However, it does not surprise education decision-makers and citizens, who are concerned about our children's education. If one were to probe a little into how the public school system runs—the policies and plans, financial investments and management, teachers' skills and professionalism, and the accountability of the actors—one might wonder whether the schools are actually designed to fail rather than run to achieve results.

Let's look at a few facts that are already known but usually considered in isolation. When put together and holistically viewed, a damning pattern of a large mismatch is revealed between the stated goals and objectives of the school system and the ways, means and resources provided to achieve the outcomes.

The international goal for developing countries, according to the Sustainable Development Goals for education (SDG4), is to ensure equitable, inclusive and quality education up to secondary level for all children by 2030. Bangladesh has pledged its support to this goal, but

has no plan or programme with a time frame and strategy prepared for this purpose. Nevertheless, the primary level, despite its many shortcomings, has a compulsory education law and an implementation plan. This situation explains the major gap in student participation between primary and secondary education.

The absence of a public obligation to provide quality secondary education to children has led to haphazard and incoherent policies and management of secondary education. At the primary level, 98 percent of children enrol in school and the government is committed to providing a government



The absence of a public obligation to provide quality secondary education to children has led to haphazard and incoherent policies and management.

VISUAL: ANWAR SOHEL

school in every community. The secondary gross enrolment rate is about 70 percent, of whom over one-third drop out before completing SSC (adding up to over half of the young people not having secondary education as reported in the survey). Of about 20,000 secondary schools and institutions, only 628 are fully supported by the government; 97 percent of secondary schools receive government support through a subvention for the basic salary of a set number of teachers. This is widely considered to be inadequate both in terms of the financial resources available to schools and the number and quality of teachers they require. There are chronic shortages of qualified subject teachers for English, math, science, computer science and

even Bangla.

Besides, there are disparities and discrimination in the distribution of schools and provisions for support between urban and rural areas. Remote areas, such as coastal and hill locations, haors and chars, are particularly at a disadvantage in receiving government support and attracting teaching personnel.

Schools cannot perform without a sufficient number of teachers with the necessary professional skills. The “staffing plan” applied for government salary subvention (known as MPO) to schools is mostly inadequate for the number of students and subjects. Even then, there are very often significant vacancies in teaching positions. Even government schools have 20 percent vacancies. The government staffing plan provides for 53 teaching positions in a collegiate school in the capital with 2000 students, but only 39 teachers were working at the school in September this year.

School management suffers due to the absence of a headmaster or an assistant headmaster's leadership. The

indicates that three-fourths of the students, both in cities and villages, go to private tutors and coaching centres and 93 percent rely on commercial guidebooks to prepare for their exams. This shows students cannot depend on classroom teaching, but more importantly, it adds hugely to the family's expenses. School education has been turned into a commodity; only those who can pay can claim it.

The rough picture presented here indicates how the basic conditions necessary for a school to perform are lacking. We have not even mentioned other concerns, such as the design and plan of the curriculum and the learning content, and the need to translate the curriculum into classroom learning activities. We have also not discussed the objectives of education: defining the subjective and objective aims and skills and competencies that learners must acquire and how these are measured and assessed. Furthermore, there are infrastructure and physical learning environment problems. All these add to the layers of complexity and problems that the education system has to address.

This disarray has not arisen suddenly. It has been in the making for a long time, primarily from neglect by the country's political system and power structure. The interim government also appears to have shied away from embarking on an education reform initiative, which it tried to take in several other areas. Belatedly, the Ministry of Education has appointed a 10-member consultative committee (headed by this writer), giving it the task to “examine prevailing teaching-learning, training and capacity-building, research and management structure in secondary education; consult with various stakeholders; and present necessary recommendations for improving the quality and standard of teaching-learning and management in secondary education.” A time frame of three months has been set for this task.

A similar consultative committee was formed last November by the Ministry of Primary and Mass Education. Its 200-page report with 100-plus recommendations under eight main categories was submitted to the government in February this year.

The Secondary Education Consultative Committee has begun its work in earnest. It expects to undertake the analysis and stakeholder consultation and prepare its recommendations within the given time frame. The committee is working on the premise that its recommendations will help set the agenda for action for the elected government that will emerge following the upcoming referendum and parliamentary election. It also hopes that the legacy of past governments' neglect will not continue.

# Time to introduce a one-stop digital financial service for migrants



Md Mahmudul Hasan is a digital banking and fintech strategist. He can be reached at hasan\_sydz1@yahoo.com.au.

MD MAHMUDUL HASAN

Twenty-seven billion dollars flowed into Bangladesh in 2024, not from global donors or foreign investors, but from taxi drivers in Dubai, nurses in London, and construction workers in Riyadh. According to the Bangladesh Bank, nearly 13 million 1.3 crore Bangladeshis working abroad sent home this record-breaking sum.

They are our remittance warriors, the backbone of our economy, yet when they return, at various institutions, we greet them with long queues, indifferent counters and financial systems designed for everyone except them.

Every month, these workers send the dollars that keep our reserves stable, feed lakhs of families, and power our economic resilience. But remittance shouldn't end with a cash pickup. It should begin a financial journey, one that unlocks savings, insurance, investment, housing, and education.

What we need is a unified digital ecosystem that can utilise existing wallets or apps to turn every remittance

into an opportunity—a platform that recognises each migrant worker as a valued lifetime client, not a one-time transaction.

Every dollar sent through formal channels builds a digital identity—a data trail that can open doors to credit, investment, and long-term stability. In contrast, the hundi route, which still handles an estimated 25 to 30 percent of flows, offers a quick fix today but no documentation, no protection, and no legacy. Hundi gives you cash; the formal system gives you a future. Every unrecorded dollar is a lost credit history, a lost opportunity to buy land, secure a loan, or invest in a child's education.

The problem isn't trust. Banks already have that. The gap lies between trust and convenience, between safety and speed. That's the bridge we must build. Our remittance earners deserve financial services that speak their language, understand their habits, and respect their time.

Technology has already made this possible. Artificial intelligence can now understand Bangla, respond to voice commands, and interact with empathy. Bangladesh Bank is piloting AI-powered Bangla chatbots with commercial banks. Picture a worker in Dubai saying, “Send 500 dirhams home and tell me how much I've saved this year.” Within seconds, his money

**Every dollar sent through formal channels builds a digital identity—a data trail that can open doors to credit, investment, and long-term stability. In contrast, the hundi route, which still handles an estimated 25 to 30 percent of flows, offers a quick fix today but no documentation, no protection, and no legacy. Hundi gives you cash; the formal system gives you a future. Every unrecorded dollar is a lost credit history, a lost opportunity to buy land, secure a loan, or invest in a child's education.**

moves, his savings goal updates, and an insurance suggestion pops up, all in Bangla.

Now imagine a digital home where every transfer connects to opportunity: micro-savings, insurance for parents, home loans, auto-financing, even lifestyle services like travel or education. When he comes home, that same ecosystem should welcome him back, not with paperwork, but with pride.

This isn't about selling more products—it's about designing dignity into every service, recognising that behind every transaction is a story, a family, a future.

To make it real, we need simpler digital know your customer (KYC), open APIs connecting banks and fintechs, and human-centred design tested with real migrants abroad. The

goal isn't digitisation. It's belonging.

Our remittance heroes carried this economy through crises. They built homes they rarely live in and funded educations they never received. They deserve an infrastructure that mirrors their resilience and respect.

This isn't charity. It's nation-building. They carried us this far. Now it's our turn to carry them forward, with dignity, opportunity, and a digital home they can finally call their own.



TAKEAWAYS FROM COP30

A milestone marked by missed chances



Dr Selim Raihan is professor in the Department of Economics at Dhaka University, and executive director at the South Asian Network on Economic Modeling (SANEM). He can be reached at selim.raihan@gmail.com.

SELIM RAIHAN

When the 30th session of the Conference of the Parties (COP) concluded on November 22, 2025, in Belém, Brazil, many left the Amazon-flanked venue with a sense that the summit had once again delivered more promise than payoff. On paper, the so-called Belém Package, a bundle of 29 decisions agreed by 195 parties, seemed to signal a renewed commitment to climate action. But digging deeper, one sees glaring omissions—no binding roadmap to phase out fossil fuels, no firm plan to stop deforestation, and climate finance pledges that remain vague at best.

From the perspective of many vulnerable countries, including Bangladesh, COP30 highlights just how creaky the traditional COP model has become. Consensus politics, once hailed as the global vehicle for climate cooperation, seems increasingly ill-suited to the urgency of our planet’s crisis. If the world continues to lean solely on this old mechanism, the gap between climate ambition and climate reality will only widen.

What COP30 delivered, and what it left unresolved

COP30 was not entirely without achievements. By adopting the Belém Package, the summit committed, in principle, to a “tripling” of climate adaptation finances by 2035. For countries such as Bangladesh, which is already experiencing climate-induced floods, cyclones, salinity intrusion, and river erosion, this signal of increased support for adaptation could serve as a lifeline. A new Just Transition Mechanism (JTM) was formalised, encompassing, for the first time under the UN climate framework, technical assistance and capacity-building, as well as support for a just transition to low-carbon economies. The global mutirão spirit, emphasising collective action, suggests that COP negotiators aim

to shift from mere symbolic pledges to more implementation-focused cooperation. There was also renewed emphasis on nature, land, forests, agriculture, and inclusive climate action that centres on communities and vulnerable populations.

Yet, the summit’s two highest-stakes issues, fossil fuel phaseout and deforestation, were effectively sidelined. Despite strong pressure from more than 80 countries to adopt a roadmap for phasing out coal, oil, and gas, powerful fossil-fuel-producing countries blocked any binding language. Similarly, though the Amazon rainforest formed a

potent backdrop to the summit, the deal lacked a credible global commitment to halt and reverse deforestation. In short, COP30 ended with many of the structural drivers of climate change, fossil fuels and deforestation, untouched.

Moreover, the promise to triple adaptation finance remains vague—no baseline was defined, the timeline stretched to 2035, and there is no clarity yet on who will foot the bill or how. For countries already beleaguered by climate shocks, such an open-ended commitment may feel too little, too late.

Why this matters for Bangladesh

For a low-lying, deltaic country like Bangladesh, with a high climate exposure factor, COP30’s outcome is a bitter pill. On the one hand, the adjusted focus on climate finance, adaptation, and just transitions provides some glimmer of hope. As floods and cyclones get worse, and shorelines retreat, stronger adaptation finance can translate into better flood protection infrastructure, early warning systems for disasters, climate-resilient agriculture, and social support for

vulnerable communities. If the JTM were paired with actual resources, it could provide a means to transition away from climate-vulnerable livelihoods towards more resilient economic activities, especially in coastal areas and flood plains.

What this implies is that unless the global community addresses the root causes—fossil fuel dependency and ecosystem destruction—we are only rearranging deck chairs on a sinking ship. Bangladesh’s vulnerability does not end with adaptation; long-term survivability depends on a deep reduction in global emissions and ecosystem protection worldwide. Without fossil-fuel phase-out or forest-protection guarantees, the greenhouse gas burden will keep increasing, sea levels will keep rising, and extreme weather will worsen.

The stalemate at COP30 reveals the Achilles heel of the traditional COP model—unanimity. As long as fossil-fuel producing countries can veto any binding commitment, the process will at best produce bland compromises. From this perspective, expecting meaningful global transformation through this mechanism feels like relying on miracles.

However, an alternate path may now be emerging, one that does not rely on global consensus but on flexible alliances. Some countries from COP30 have already indicated they will pursue fossil-fuel transition and forest-protection roadmaps outside the formal UN process, via “climate clubs” or coalitions of the willing. What this means is that progress might come not from universal consensus, but from a network of countries ready to act together.

For Bangladesh, this brings both opportunities and challenges. A climate club approach might offer a more direct path to decarbonisation, technology transfer, and financing, particularly through partnered action with developing countries suffering from the climate. But it also comes with risks. Will these alliances prioritise countries of economic or strategic weight to the exclusion of countries like Bangladesh? And what if “club climate action” ends up exacerbating just the sort of global inequalities that it is trying to overcome?

If we are to benefit, then Bangladesh, in collaboration with regional partners, must proactively engage with these emerging

coalitions. We need to ensure that climate clubs are inclusive and align with the interests of vulnerable nations. Otherwise, the shift in global governance may leave us behind.

COP30 shows that climate politics is evolving, but slowly. For Bangladesh, the summit should be a wake-up call—adaptation financing pledges are welcome, but cannot substitute for mitigation; consensus-driven diplomacy may stall when the stakes are highest; and new forms of cooperation, flexible, coalition-based, action-oriented, may produce more real change.

First, policymakers and civil society in Bangladesh should treat the COP30 adaptation pledge as a starting gun. They must engage immediately with multilateral funds, humanitarian agencies, and development partners to shape how adaptation financing will reach vulnerable communities. There is a narrow but real opportunity to secure funds for resilient infrastructure, climate-smart agriculture, and disaster management systems—investments that can save lives and livelihoods.

Second, Bangladesh must adopt a dual-track climate strategy, strengthening adaptation and social protection on one hand, while pursuing decarbonisation and integration with emerging climate-club frameworks on the other. Our export-oriented industries, manufacturing, RMG, and energy should be pulled into a low-carbon transition early, leveraging the rising global demand for greener supply chains.

Third, at the regional and global level, Bangladesh must join forces with other climate-vulnerable countries to pressure climate clubs to prioritise equity and inclusion. These should not be new venues for climate colonialism, but spaces for technology transfer, financial assistance, and shared adaptation-mitigation action planning. The country’s diplomacy should embody this necessity.

Finally, Bangladesh should continue building its internal capacities in climate governance, climate-disaster risk management, renewable energy deployment, and social protection. Unless we build domestic resilience and adaptive capacity, external promises, even genuine ones, will not suffice.



Members of the Belém Action Mechanism (BAM) hold a demonstration during the COP30 UN Climate Change Conference in Belém, Para state, Brazil on November 21, 2025.

FILE PHOTO: AFP

A meagre outcome with major consequences



MIND THE GAP

Barrister Noshin Nawal is a columnist for The Daily Star. She can be reached at nawalnoshin1@gmail.com.

NOSHIN NAWAL

The Conference of the Parties (COP) 30 has ended, and the United Nations’ reaction was immediate and unusually blunt: the results were meagre. In diplomatic language, such phrasing is rarely accidental. It signals not disappointment at the margins, but concern about the direction global climate governance is taking. COP30 was expected to mark a turning point. Instead, it confirmed how entrenched the political resistance remains and how limited the current frameworks are in producing meaningful outcomes.

The consequences are not abstract. Every delayed commitment, every softened line of text, and every diluted pledge translates into escalating risk for millions of people living in climate-vulnerable regions. Rising temperatures are no longer projections. They are now lived realities, with heatwaves, coastal erosion, flooding, and food insecurity becoming annual features of national governance challenges. When climate negotiations stall, those risks intensify.

Legally, COP30 reaffirmed the central weakness of the Paris Agreement architecture. It is cooperative but not binding, aspirational but not enforceable. The structure relies on voluntary commitments, peer pressure, and moral persuasion. These mechanisms work only if states are politically willing, and COP30 revealed a collective unwillingness to move beyond the minimum. The failure to secure concrete language on fossil fuel phase-out, financial obligations, or transparent implementation pathways means the world continues to operate under a framework that encourages ambition while legitimising delay.

For developing countries, the legal and practical consequences are immediate. Adaptation finance, which was meant to be a cornerstone of global climate equity, remains inconsistent and structurally insufficient. Commitments are made, celebrated, and quietly unmet. Funding that arrives is highly conditional, slow to disburse, and often directed through

intermediaries rather than directly to the governments that need it. This undermines national planning and forces countries to navigate an unpredictable and fragmented financial landscape.

For Bangladesh, the inadequacy of COP30 is not a distant diplomatic concern but an immediate existential issue. As one of the most climate-vulnerable states in the world, Bangladesh faces the consequences of global inaction with disproportionate severity. Rising sea levels threaten to displace millions, salinity intrusion erodes agricultural productivity, intensified cyclones strain national infrastructure, and recurring floods impose heavy economic losses that exceed the state’s adaptive capacity.

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disproportionate severity. Rising sea levels threaten to displace millions, salinity intrusion erodes agricultural productivity, intensified cyclones strain national infrastructure, and recurring floods impose heavy economic losses that exceed the state’s adaptive capacity. Without predictable financing, enforceable mitigation commitments from major emitters or a functional loss and damage regime, Bangladesh is forced into a position where

resilience must be built domestically while the international system fails to uphold its responsibilities. This is not merely inequitable; it undermines the core principles of climate justice that the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) was designed to protect. COP30 did not produce a clear liability structure, nor did it specify long-term financial sources. Without enforceability, the Fund for Responding to Loss and Damage (FRLD) remains a symbolic victory rather than a substantive one. Countries facing inundation, displacement and economic loss are left without the legal certainty that international law should provide.

This ongoing failure has deeper implications. International climate law is increasingly at risk of becoming a patchwork of political gestures without operative force. The absence of binding obligations creates a structural inequality between nations that can afford adaptation and those that cannot. It erodes trust and undermines the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities, which was intended to recognise historical emissions and capacity differences. If COP outcomes continue to shift responsibility downward while accountability remains diffused, global climate governance will lose legitimacy.

There are geopolitical consequences as well. As negotiations stagnate, more states are turning to litigation to fill the vacuum. Climate cases brought before national courts, regional tribunals and international bodies have surged in the past five years. Plaintiffs are no longer arguing broad moral responsibility. They are arguing breach of duty, negligence and violation of rights. Courts are beginning to define obligations in ways climate negotiations fail to do, and COP30’s weaknesses will likely accelerate this trend.

If current patterns continue, we may also see a rise in unilateral and regional policy blocs. States that cannot rely on global agreements may begin forming smaller alliances with enforceable trade conditions tied to emissions standards and adaptation commitments. This shift would fragment climate governance further, leaving vulnerable nations outside decision-making circles where they need representation.

The humanitarian consequences are equally severe. With global mitigation stalled, climate-vulnerable states are forced to

adapt to changes that exceed their institutional capacities. This accelerates migration pressures, infrastructure collapse, disease outbreaks and economic instability. These impacts spread beyond borders and reshape regional politics, labour markets and security landscapes. COP30’s failure, therefore, imposes cascading costs on states least equipped to bear them.

The legal community must now confront an uncomfortable reality. The current system, built on voluntary pledges and moral commitments, is not delivering outcomes proportionate to the scale of the crisis. It was designed to foster cooperation,

but cooperation has limits when it conflicts with economic self-interest. Without binding obligations, transparent review mechanisms and credible enforcement tools, COP agreements risk becoming statements of intent rather than instruments of governance.

The consequences of COP30 will not be felt in diplomatic halls. They will be felt in coastlines that recede, in dried farmlands, in cities that overheat and in communities that relocate because international law failed to protect them. Climate-vulnerable nations now stand at an inflection point. They cannot rely on global goodwill. They must push for

structural reform in negotiations, expand climate litigation strategies, strengthen regional alliances and invest in domestic resilience. The world does not have the luxury of waiting for political consensus.

COP30 did not deliver the outcomes that science demands or justice requires. The consequences of that failure are already unfolding. Unless the global community moves from symbolic progress to legally enforceable commitments, the climate crisis will continue to evolve faster than the institutions created to address it. The window for course correction is narrowing, and every weak COP outcome shortens it further.

Government of the Peoples Republic of Bangladesh  
Office of the Commandant  
Police Training Center, Rangpur  
www.police.gov.bd

Memo No. 2949/PTC  
Date: 26 -Nov-2025

e-Tender Notice

For financial year 2025-26, e-Tender is invited in the National e-GP Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) for the procurement of

Sl No.	Description	Tender ID	Procurement Method	Scheduled Tender Publication Date & Time	Tender Opening Date and Time
1.	Lentils (Musur Dal)	1181892	OTM	30-Nov-2025 12:00	18-Dec-2025 12:00
2.	Soyabean Oil	1182450	OTM	30-Nov-2025 12:00	18-Dec-2025 12:00
3.	Grinding wheat (Gom pesai)	1183081	OTM	30-Nov-2025 12:00	18-Dec-2025 12:00
4.	Polao Rice	1183185	OTM	30-Nov-2025 12:00	18-Dec-2025 12:00
5.	Firewood (Jalani Khori)	1183632	OTM	30-Nov-2025 12:00	18-Dec-2025 12:00
6.	Handling and Transportation	1183748	OTM	30-Nov-2025 12:00	18-Dec-2025 12:00

This is an online tender, where only e-Tenders will be accepted in e-GP Portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted. To submit e-Tender, registration on the e-GP system ([www.eprocure.gov.bd](http://www.eprocure.gov.bd)) is mandatory.

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

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

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GD-2595



WHAT'S THE HAPS?

‘THE CATCHER IN THE RYE’

*The Catcher in the Rye*, an exhibition where the voices of marginalised children come alive through their art. **Project Pothchola**, an initiative of the Give Bangladesh Foundation, showcases the art of children who grew up in red-light areas, offering a window into their dreams, struggles, and imagination. These young artists have turned their struggles into imagination, showing the strength and dreams that often go unnoticed.

Date: Friday–Saturday | Dec 5-6, 2025  
Time: 3pm to 10pm  
Venue: National Art Gallery, BSA



REJOINER

An article titled “Enough is enough: Showbiz women clap back at virtual harassment”, published on November 29 under the 16 Days of Activism shoulder in The Daily Star, included a quote from actress Ashna Habib Bhabna. The actress referenced a social media campaign titled #MyNumberMyStory, which she incorrectly attributed to UN Women (UNW).

This information was incorrect: UN Women did not launch any campaign under that name. The attribution resulted from a miscommunication regarding the details provided by the artiste.

The Daily Star regrets the error and apologises for publishing the misinformation.

HAMIN AHMED disseminates decades of knowledge in masterclass



Miles frontman Hamin Ahmed led the third edition of the Guitar Masterclass (GMC) Session yesterday evening at the Yamaha Flagship Centre in Tejgaon, offering aspiring guitarists a deep dive into professional musicianship and the modern industry. Organised by Team Alpha, the event combined hands-on learning with intimate insights from the maestro.

NAVEEN ISLAM TOREE

The session was structured in two parts: the first focused on technique, tone shaping, and the essential skills of digital music-making. The second half provided a fascinating glimpse into Ahmed’s personal studio setup, where he broke down his gear, from his audio interface and monitoring chain to his processors and plug-ins. He demonstrated how he meticulously builds tone layers and shapes dynamics, stressing that contemporary guitarists must master both analogue warmth and digital precision. A key highlight was his detailed breakdown of iconic Miles tracks like *Priyotoma*, *Jay Din Jay*, and *Dhiki Dhiki*, examining their emotional texture and chord voicings.

Speaking afterwards to The Daily Star, Ahmed addressed the challenges facing young artists. He observed

that today’s society is “disposable” due to the never-ending content flow, but maintained that “what matters is a great song”, proven by Miles’ continued relevance to the 18-24 age group. He cautioned against internet-fueled insecurity, urging musicians to focus on honing skills rather than comparing themselves to others.

Ahmed’s tone hardened when discussing the business side, stressing that musicians must be conscious of their rights and strict about securing royalties. He acknowledged that many artists are ill-equipped for the legal realities, advising them to “approach this smartly”.

Asked for the best musical advice he had ever received, Ahmed smiled and replied, “Nobody”. He concluded by stating the only thing a musician truly needs is “love for music”, emphasising that passion and discipline are the foundation of a lasting career.

Month-long Jatra festival begins at Shilpakala Academy in December

The Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy is launching a month-long Jatra festival this December to mark Victory Month, aiming to revive interest in the traditional folk theatre form. Held from December 1 to 31, the festival will feature daily Jatra performances at 6:30pm at the Experimental Theatre Hall, with troupes from across the country participating.

Tickets are priced at Tk 100, and all proceeds will go directly to the performing artistes as financial support for their work in preserving this heritage. Alongside the stage productions, the National Theatre Hall’s open courtyard will host patriotic Jatra song concerts every day at 5pm, celebrating the spirit of liberation. The event is organised by the academy’s Drama and Film Department.



NEWS

Verdict in case against Hasina

FROM PAGE 12  
On November 25, Judge Md Rabiul Alam of the Special Judge’s Court-4 of Dhaka set the date after concluding the trial in 14 hearings, said Belal Hossain, bench assistant of the court.  
The verdict is expected to be delivered around 10:30am, he added.  
The other accused include former housing and public works state minister Sharif Ahmed, former secretary Kazi Washi Uddin, former additional secretary Md Oliullah, former administrative officer Saiful Islam Sarkar, and former senior assistant secretary Purabi Golder.  
Rajuk’s ex-chairman Anisur Rahman Miah; former members, Mohammad Khurshid Alam, Tanmoy Das, Mohammad Nasir Uddin, Shamsuddin Ahmod Chowdhury, and Nurul Islam; former deputy director Nayeab Ali Sharif and former assistant director Mazharul Islam are accused among others.  
Prime Minister Office’s former secretary Mohammad Salahuddin is also an accused in the case.  
Only Khurshid is now in jail among the accused.  
Thirty-two people testified in the case during the trial, according to the case records.  
Of them, three are Anti Corruption Commission officials; four Rajuk officials; four employees of the housing

and public works ministry; three tax office employees; three Sonali Bank officials; three employees of Eastern Housing Ltd, and three staffers of Dhaka South City Corporation.  
The others include three employees of Chief Adviser’s Office; two magistrates of Chief Metropolitan Magistrate’s Court of Dhaka; three former sub-registrars in Dhaka and Gazipur; and a director of the Bureau of Manpower, Employment and Training.  
Besides, the trials of two other corruption cases lodged against 21 people, including Hasina, her nieces Azmina Siddiq and Tulip, and nephew Radwan Mujib Siddiq Bobby, are now pending at the same court. The verdicts of the cases are expected to be delivered in January next year, says the prosecution.  
Tulip used her power to get plots for Rehana, Bobby, and Azmina, say ACC officials.  
Between January 12 to 14 this year, the graft watchdog filed six cases with its Dhaka Integrated District Office-1 over alleged irregularities in the allocation of plots under the Purbachal New Town project.  
In the cases, the ACC brought charges of criminal misconduct under section 5(2) of the Prevention of Corruption Act, 1947, along with several other charges, including criminal breach of trust and cheating, in the Penal Code.

The anti-graft body alleged that Hasina, in collusion with senior Rajuk officials, unlawfully secured six plots – each measuring 10 kathas – in the diplomatic zone of Sector 27 of the Purbachal New Town project for herself, her son Sajeeb Wazed Joy and daughter Saima Wazed Putul; and Rehana, her son Bobby and daughter Azmina despite their ineligibility under existing regulations.  
On March 25, the ACC filed six charge sheets with the Metropolitan Senior Special Judge’s Court in Dhaka where Hasina was named as a common accused in all six cases.  
Charges were framed against 29 people on July 31, including Hasina, Rehana, Joy, Putul, Bobby, Tulip and Azmina, in their respective cases.  
On November 27, Hasina was sentenced to 21 years’ rigorous imprisonment, seven years in each of the three cases filed the over Purbachal plot scam. Joy and Putul were co-accused in separate cases – one each – and were given five years’ imprisonment.  
In the cases, Sharif, Washi, Purabi, Anisur, Nasir, Shamsuddin, and Khurshid were convicted for various jail terms, while Saiful was acquitted.  
Salahuddin, Tanmoy, Nurul, and Nayeab Ali were sentenced to different jail terms in two graft cases, while Mazharul was jailed in a graft case.

AI fuelling cyber violence against women

FROM PAGE 12  
Contacted by The Daily Star, Niva said, “What I saw left me shaken. I had no idea how to react.”  
After confiding in her husband and family, she approached the police, who found several of her students – all minors – involved. They were counselled and handed over to their parents. Police assured her the doctored images had been removed.  
But the trauma stayed. “Even now, I live in constant fear. The social humiliation hasn’t gone away.”  
Niva’s experience reflects a rising trend where AI-generated deepfakes and digitally manipulated sexual content are weaponised against women and girls, undermining dignity and affecting victims physically, psychologically, and professionally.  
From media personalities and political leaders to activists, young professionals, and ordinary women, no one is exempt.  
Last December, a fabricated image involving Environment Adviser Syeda Rizwana Hasan and actress Mehazabien Chowdhury was widely circulated. The AI-generated photocard falsely depicted Mehazabien in an “environment-friendly condom dress”, with a caption implying the adviser endorsed it.  
According to a UN Women report, AI is creating new forms of abuse and amplifying existing ones at alarming rates. Studies show that technology-facilitated violence against women affects between 16 and 58 percent of women globally.  
The National Violence Against Women (VAW) Survey-2024, conducted by BBS with UNFPA assistance, showed that 8.3 percent of women – especially younger, digitally connected ones in urban areas – experience technology-facilitated gender-based violence (TFGBV), including unwanted sexual communication, blackmail, image-based abuse, or other forms of online control.  
A report by Cyber Support for Women and Children (CSWC), a coalition of 14 rights groups led by BLAST, found that offenders are increasingly weaponising AI, making crimes more layered and harder to trace.  
Supreme Court lawyer Barrister Priya Ahsan Chowdhury said, “With AI, it has become very easy to create fake or sexually suggestive images – even if offenders don’t have any personal photos. Previously, people would cut

and paste faces. Now it takes a single image and a free AI tool.”  
Cybercrime consultant Gazi Mahfuz Ul Kabir said, “In the past, leaking private photos required technical effort. Now anyone can create explicit or misleading content simply by uploading one image. This no-skills process is extremely dangerous.”  
PROBING TFGVB CHALLENGING  
AHM Shahadat Hossain, assistant inspector general (Media) at the Police Headquarters, said social stigma remains a key barrier. “Victims feel shame and fear the consequences. Many don’t want to be exposed. When we advise them to lodge a general diary or file a case, they often withdraw or negotiate with perpetrators due to pressure, preventing police from pursuing offenders.”  
Gazi Mahfuz Ul said offenders usually share files in closed groups on platforms such as Telegram or Terabox, leaving police without direct links for removal. “Major tech companies, operating outside Bangladesh, follow global rather than local policies, slowing down takedown responses.... When an image is repeatedly shared, its metadata changes, making it nearly impossible to trace the original uploader.”  
The VAW-2024 survey noted that police and judges require specialised training on digital violence. It recorded instances where officers downplayed image-based abuse or focused only on Facebook, leaving platforms like Snapchat, Telegram, and TikTok largely unmonitored.  
AIG Shahadat said police also face technological limitations. “Investigative tools are often misunderstood as intrusive surveillance, but they’re used solely to identify offenders and ensure justice.”  
JUSTICE SYSTEM ILL-EQUIPPED  
The new Cyber Protection Ordinance-2025 criminalises harmful or intimidating materials generated or edited using AI.  
However, Women and Children Affairs Adviser Sharmeen S Murshid said on November 25, “While Bangladesh has strong laws to combat cybercrime, weak enforcement is allowing offenders to act with increasing impunity.”  
Barrister Priya said the justice system is “not prepared at all”. “While cyber units and helplines exist, survivors often receive little meaningful assistance.”  
She cited cases where police

discouraged victims from filing complaints. In one instance, a survivor was warned that a case could be filed against her as well, prompting her to withdraw. In another case, the officers were unaware of the cyber protection laws.  
“Such gaps leave survivors exposed from the outset, and the absence of victim or witness protection mechanisms discourages many from reporting.”  
Priya also pointed to a critical gap: forensic evidence remains optional, weakening the legal framework for digital crimes. “Courts currently accept screenshots as evidence, although these can be manipulated and lack context. More advanced recording methods used abroad have not been adopted.”  
A 2024 study by the Media, Law, and Digital Space Cohort said Bangladesh urgently needs more digital forensic experts, as collaboration between police and specialists remains limited, and cases rarely receive technical support.  
“Digital evidence and forensic reports are highly technical, and justice sector actors – including judges – require further training. Mandatory forensic evidence, improved lab capacity, and technical expertise are essential,” Priya said.  
NATION LACKS DIGITAL READINESS  
Kazi Mustafiz, president of the Cyber Crime Awareness Foundation, said most incidents stem from poor digital literacy and weak understanding of data protection. “Despite having multiple digital forensic labs, services remain inaccessible to ordinary citizens. Increasing capacity and skilled manpower is essential.”  
He stressed that careless sharing of personal data continues to put individuals at risk. “Widespread awareness of AI-related offences is essential, especially among political leaders.”  
Gazi Mahfuz Ul urged the government to establish a one-stop cyber crisis centre for rapid takedowns, victim support, and direct liaison with global tech companies.  
He also called for large-scale digital literacy programmes in schools, universities, and communities. “One simple rule is never to share unnecessary personal photos or videos. Once online, they can be misused to create AI-generated content. In rural areas especially, the consequences can be devastating.”

Judicial independence

FROM PAGE 12  
The statements must include the salaries and allowances payable to judges, judicial officers, judicial staff, and officers and employees; the administrative expenses required for running the judicial administration of the country; and the recurring and development expenditures, research, training and other ancillary expenses of the SC, subordinate courts and related offices, organisations, institutions, commissions, institutes, academies, etc.  
The chief justice – who will be the final authority for approving the expenditure of funds allocated in the budget for the SC secretariat – will forward the statements to the finance minister for submitting to the parliament by attaching them to the government’s financial statement.  
The SC and the SC secretariat must send the initial projections and estimates of revenue targets, receipts and preliminary expenditure limits to

the government.  
According to Article 88(c) of the Constitution, the salaries and allowances of the officers and employees of the SC secretariat and all administrative expenses must be charged upon the consolidated fund.  
Funds passed in the national budget for the SC must be directly to the SC registrar and funds for the SC secretariat must be sent separately.  
No prior approval of the government is required for incurring expenditure from the annual national budget allocated in favour of the SC and the SC Secretariat, according to the ordinance.  
The National Lawyers Alliance (NLA), a professional body supported by the National Citizen Party, welcomed the government’s move to issue the ordinance.  
However, it was inappropriate to include the attorney general in the SC Secretariat Commission, NLA’s Convener Advocate SM Azmal Hossain told The Daily Star.

3 killed, 9 hurt

FROM PAGE 12  
escalated, drawing supporters from both sides into a fierce confrontation, armed with sticks, sharp weapons, and locally made arms.  
Ershad and Kulshom died on the spot. Kawser succumbed to his injuries on the way to hospital.  
Eyewitness Jahiur Islam said no one dared intervene as both groups appeared prepared for violence. He added that villagers now fear retaliation.  
Nine injured people were taken to Nageshwari Upazila Health Complex and other facilities.  
Dr Noor Islam of the health complex said the conditions of Nur Mohammad and his elder brother were critical, with severe injuries to their heads, arms, and legs. Preparations were underway in the afternoon to transfer both to Rangpur Medical College Hospital.  
Nageshwari Police Station OC Rezaul Karim said officers rushed to the spot, recovered the bodies, and brought the situation under control.  
Additional personnel have since been deployed and patrols intensified.



Saleh, Sohel re-elected DRU president, general secy



Abu Saleh Sohel

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Abu Saleh Akon of The Daily Navadiganta and Mynul Hasan Sohel of The Daily Inqilab were re-elected as president and general secretary of Dhaka Reporters Unity yesterday.

Mehedi Azad Masum was elected vice president, while Jafar Iqbal was elected joint secretary.

Other elected office bearers are finance secretary Niaz Mahmud Sohel, organising secretary MM Jasim, office secretary Mohammad Rashim Mollah, women affairs secretary Jannatul Fedous Panna, publicity and publication secretary Mizan Chowdhury, ICT and training secretary Mahmud Sohel, sports secretary Omar Faruk Rubel, cultural secretary Monowar Hossain, hospitality secretary Aminul Haque Bhuiyan and welfare secretary Rafique Mridha.

Out of a total of 1,757 voters, 1,444 cast their votes from 9:00am to 5:00pm.

EC plans to increase secret voting rooms at polling centres

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Election Commission has decided to keep the number of polling centres and booths unchanged while installing two secret rooms in each booth to ease voter pressure.

EC Senior Secretary Akhtar Ahmed briefed reporters yesterday evening after consultation and preparatory meetings with 34 ministries, divisions and authorities ahead of the February election.

Referring to mock voting observations, he said two secret voting rooms in each booth would eliminate the need for additional polling centres. The budget may rise slightly due to the installation of the extra secret rooms.

Ahead of the election, the EC has finalised 42,761 polling centres and 244,649 polling booths nationwide, including 129,602 for women and 115,137 for men. Regarding the overall law and order, he said it remains satisfactory but noted that the EC's formal responsibilities will begin once the election schedule is announced.

To ensure the financial security of polling officials, the EC has decided to increase their allowances, he said. It is also introducing financial incentives for officials.

Digital family court introduced in Ctg

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

With an aim to digitalise the judiciary and ease the long-standing suffering of litigants, the e-family court was officially introduced in the Chattogram Court yesterday.

Court sources said five types of cases will be under the e-family court's jurisdiction: divorce, restitution of conjugal rights, dower (mahr), maintenance, and guardianship and custody of children.

Complainants, defendants, lawyers, court support staff, judges, and the general public can use the e-family court website after registration.

Hypertension

FROM PAGE 3

The survey says 26.7 percent of people aged 15 years and above consume tobacco or tobacco products, down from 29.6 percent in the 2014 survey. There is a significant gender gap: 38 percent of men use tobacco, compared to 16 percent of women.

Drug use is comparatively low (0.8 percent), yet it places a financial burden on families. Urban drug users spend an average of Tk 1,428 per month, compared to Tk 556 in rural areas.

The survey highlights the prevalence of physical and mental disabilities, which also impose financial strain. On average, 5.2 out of every 100 people live with some form of disability. Age is a major factor: among people aged 18 and above, the disability rate is 7.1 percent, compared to 1.8 percent among those under 18.

Average expenditure on disability-related treatment is Tk 6,775. In rural areas, it is Tk 7,269, higher than the urban average of Tk 5,417.

The survey shows 108 out of every 1 lakh population have tuberculosis, while 0.38 out of every 1,000 have malaria. It also shows 91.2 out of every 1 lakh population had Hepatitis B.

Aleya Akter, secretary of the Statistics and Informatics Division, and Huzur Ali, additional secretary of the Health Services Division, also spoke at the programme, with BBS Director General Mohammed Mizanur Rahman in the chair.

Inu's petition rejected

FROM PAGE 3

They alleged he instructed Kushtia police to prepare lists of protesters, approved earlier acts of repression and supported helicopter assaults and armed crackdowns. His public remarks and alliance meetings, they claimed, legitimised violence across the country.

The prosecution said eyewitness testimony, digital communications and forensic evidence form a robust chain proving his complicity beyond doubt.

Earlier, the tribunal dismissed a defence petition seeking a review of the charge framing against Inu, ruling that the charge frame was upheld and that objections must be settled during trial, not at the preliminary stage.

Chief Prosecutor Tajul Islam told reporters the tribunal rejected the defence's attempt to question the qualitative value of evidence, adding that the review petition contained three serious and unacceptable remarks challenging the government's authority to enact laws and describing the July uprising as so-called.

He termed these comments contemptuous and seditious and sought a contempt notice against Inu.

The tribunal did not issue any order regarding the contempt and seditious claimed by the prosecution in court. However, while briefing journalists after the proceedings, Tajul said the tribunal's observations on the issue would be reflected in the order.

Sifat Mahmud, a member of Inu's defence team, said they had sought discharge, arguing that the charges were baseless, politically motivated and unsupported by credible evidence.

He claimed Inu had no authority over law enforcement, that the investigation was biased and that the audio evidence contained inconsistencies. He said Inu had publicly urged restraint and dialogue.

Meanwhile, ICT 1 yesterday ordered BNP chairperson's adviser and Supreme Court lawyer Fazlur Rahman to appear before it on December 8

to explain why contempt proceedings should not be initiated against him.

The order came after prosecutors accused him of making adverse remarks on a television talk show on November 26, questioning the tribunal's legitimacy and suggesting its proceedings were being run through an internal arrangement.

The tribunal directed Fazlur to bring his academic and bar certificates to the next hearing.

ICT-1 also ordered authorities to produce Shahriar Kabir, former president of Ekattorer Ghatok Dalal Nirmul Committee, before the court on January 12 in connection with the 2013 Hefazat e Islam rally at Motijheel's Shapla Chattar. He is currently in jail in another case.

PRAYER TIMING  
DECEMBER 1

Fazr	Zohr	Asr	Maghrib	Esha
AZAN 5-15	12-45	3-45	5-19	7-00
JAMAAT 5-50	1-15	4-00	5-22	7-30

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

'TEARS OF A FLOWER' Amaya Rahman's poetry collection released



CITY DESK

A young Bangladeshi poet, Amaya Rahman, has released her debut poetry collection, "Tears of a Flower", which addresses two of Bangladesh's most overlooked subjects that deeply concern today's young generation: mental health and pressing social issues such as the July uprising and the Milestone jet crash.

Published by Subarna Publications, the book was launched at the capital's Gulshan Club on November 29, said a press release.

The collection is divided into two sections, "Bleeding" and "Hope", where the author explores mental health and broader societal issues.

Farooq Sobhan, former foreign secretary and ambassador, attended the launch as the chief guest.

Other guests included Naira Khan, associate professor of linguistics at Dhaka University; Tibra Ali, professor and associate dean of research at BRAC University's School of Data and Sciences; Anita Ghazi Rahman, senior lawyer of the Supreme Court and founder of The Legal Circle; and Khadija Afzal, senior vice president of the Bangladesh Federation of Women Entrepreneurs.

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh  
Ministry of Food  
Directorate General of Food  
Procurement Division  
16, Abdul Gani Road, Dhaka  
www.dgfood.gov.bd

No. 13.01.0000.093.46.014.25-890 Date: 30/11/2025

**International Tender Notice for Import of Non-Basmati Parboiled Rice (Package-09, FY 2025-2026)**

International tender in sealed cover are invited from bonafide traders for supply of 50,000 (Fifty thousand) (±5%) Metric Tons of Non-Basmati Parboiled Rice. The particulars of international tender are furnished below:

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh			
1	Ministry/Division	:	Ministry of Food
2	Agency	:	Not applicable
3	Procuring entity name	:	Director Procurement
4	Procuring entity code	:	Not applicable
5	Procuring entity district	:	Dhaka
6	Invitation for	:	Procurement of 50,000 MT (±5%) Non-Basmati Parboiled Rice
7	Invitation Ref. No. & date	:	13.01.0000.093.46.014.25-890, Dated: 30/11/2025
<b>KEY INFORMATION</b>			
8	Procuring method	:	International Open Tender Method
<b>FUNDING INFORMATION</b>			
9	Budget and source of fund	:	GoB fund
10	Development partners (if applicable)	:	Not applicable
<b>PARTICULAR INFORMATION</b>			
11	Project/ programme / code (if applicable)	:	Not applicable
12	Project/ programme name (if applicable)	:	Not applicable
13	Package No.	:	Package-09
14	Package name	:	Procurement of 50,000 MT (±5%) Non-Basmati Parboiled Rice
15	Notice publication date	:	01 December, 2025
16	Selling of tender schedule	:	01 December, 2025 to 14 December, 2025 up to 4 30pm (BST)
17	Date and time of closing	:	15 December, 2025, Upto Time 1.00pm (BST)
18	Date and time of opening	:	15 December, 2025, Time 2.00pm (BST)
19 Name and address of the office(s):			
Selling tender documents		:	Office Chamber of Director (Procurement), Room No. 501, Directorate General of Food, 16, Abdul Gani Road, Dhaka.
Receiving place of tender		:	1) Office Chamber of Director (Procurement), Room No. 501, Directorate General of Food, 16, Abdul Gani Road, Dhaka. 2) Office Chamber of Additional Secretary, Room No. 114, (1st Floor), Building No. 04, Ministry of Food, Bangladesh Secretariat, Dhaka.
Opening place of tender		:	Office Chamber of Director (Procurement), Room No. 501, Directorate General of Food, 16, Abdul Gani Road, Dhaka.
20	Place/date/time of pre-tender meeting (optional)	:	Not applicable
<b>INFORMATION FOR TENDERER</b>			
21	Eligibility of tenderer	:	Necessary papers to be submitted complying the conditions mentioned in the tender documents.
22	Brief description of goods or works	:	50,000 (±5%) (Fifty thousand) MT. of Non-Basmati Parboiled Rice at Chattogram (60%) and Mongla (40%) Port on CIF Liner Out term. Cost of the Cargo, Insurance and Freight including Stevedoring, Overseas Handling and Lightering are on seller's account. Single price per MT is to be quoted in US\$.
23	Brief description of related services	:	Not applicable
24	Price of tender document (Tk.)	:	Tk 5,000 (five thousand) or USD 100 (One hundred) non-refundable by Pay Order/Bank Draft drawn in favour of Director General, Directorate General of Food.
Mode of payment		:	Through Letter of Credit (L/C).
Crop year		:	2025 or latest
Validity of the offer		:	29 December, 2025 Upto 5.00pm (BST)

**25 Quality & Specification:**

Quality parameters	Specification	Margin of tolerance with claim for deviation beyond specification	Rejection
Moisture (maximum)	13.5%	14.0%	above 14.0%
Broken grain (Maximum)	5.0% (Rice of size 3/4th and below will be considered as broken and less than 1/4th broken should not be more than 2%)	6.0% (Rice of size 3/4th and below will be considered as broken and less than 1/4th broken should not be more than 3%)	above 6.0%
Foreign matter (Maximum)	0.3%	0.5%	above 0.5%
Dead, damaged & discoloured grains (Maximum)	3% in total	4.0%	above 4.0%
Radio-Activity (maximum)	50 Bq/Kg of 137Cs/134Cs (Relaxable for the crop of SAARC and South-East Asian country)	50 Bq/Kg of 137Cs/134Cs (Relaxable for the crop of SAARC and South-East Asian country)	above 50 Bq/Kg of 137Cs/134Cs

All the parameters must be limited to percentage mentioned against each item individually and separately.

Pack No.	Identification of Shipment	Country of origin	Location	Tender security amount (US\$)	Shipment period
Pack-09	50,000 MT (±5%) Non-Basmati Parboiled Rice on CIF Liner out term	Any country of the world except Israel	Chattogram Port-60% and Mongla Port-40%	US\$ 300,000 (Three hundred thousand) in favour of Director General of Food for 50,000 MT Parboiled Rice (±5%) in the form of a Bank Draft/Pay-Order (No Bank Guarantee is allowed)	40 (forty) days from the date of opening of the L/C. Note that at least 50% of the total quantity must be shipped within 25 days of opening of the L/C.

**PROCURING ENTITY DETAILS**

26	Name of official inviting tender	Md. Moniruzzaman
27	Designation of official inviting tender	Director (Procurement)
28	Address of official inviting tender	Office Chamber of Director (Procurement), Room No. 501, Directorate General of Food, 16, Abdul Gani Road, Dhaka.
29	Contact details of official inviting tender	Phone: +88-02-41050178 E-mail: dproc@dgfood.gov.bd
30	(i) Incomplete, conditional tender and alternate offer shall not be considered. The procuring entity reserves the right to accept or reject all tenders partly or wholly without assigning any reason. (ii) Tenderer who has been awarded two NOAs (Notification of Award) waiting for signing the contract or has signed two contracts but shipment under any of the contracts has not yet set sailed for destination, shall not be eligible to participate in the tender; (iii) Tenderer who had been awarded NOAs (Notification of Award) earlier but could not execute contract by submitting PG (Performance Guarantee) on time, shall not be eligible to participate in the next two tenders; (iv) Tenderer whose bid-bonds had been forfeited twice for not submitting PG or signing contract on time, shall not be eligible to participate in the tender for the rest period of the current financial year, whether the money accruing from the bid-bonds so forfeited is deposited to the Government treasury or not; (v) Tenderer whose whole PG (Performance Guarantee) had been forfeited for non-supply of the contracted quantity, shall not be eligible to participate in the tender for the rest period of the current financial year, whether the money accruing from PG so forfeited is deposited to the Government treasury or not.	

Md. Moniruzzaman  
Director  
Procurement Division  
Directorate General of Food  
Phone: +88-02-41050178  
E-mail: dproc@dgfood.gov.bd

GD-2603

বাংলাদেশ শিল্পকলা একাডেমি  
সেগুনবাগিচা, রমনা, ঢাকা।  
www.shilpakala.gov.bd

নম্বর: ৪৩.২০.০০০০.০১৩.৩৮.০১৪.২৫.৫২ তারিখ: ৩০-১১-২০২৫

দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি	
১. সংস্থার নাম	বাংলাদেশ শিল্পকলা একাডেমি, সেগুনবাগিচা, রমনা, ঢাকা
২. সংগ্রহকারী প্রতিষ্ঠান	সচিব, বাংলাদেশ শিল্পকলা একাডেমি, সেগুনবাগিচা, রমনা, ঢাকা
৩. জেলা	ঢাকা
৪. বাজেট ও অর্থের উৎস	রাজস্ব খাত
৫. দরপত্রের নাম/ কাজের বিবরণ	'মহান বিজয় দিবস-২০২৫' উদযাপন উপলক্ষে আয়োজনের বিভিন্ন কাজ
৬. অনুষ্ঠানের স্থান	সোহরাওয়ার্দী উদ্যান, ঢাকা
৭. দরপত্র দলিল প্রাপ্তি	অর্থ, হিসাব ও পরিকল্পনা উপবিভাগ, নিচতলা, প্রশিক্ষণ ভবন, বাংলাদেশ শিল্পকলা একাডেমি, সেগুনবাগিচা, রমনা, ঢাকা
৮. ক্রয় প্রক্রিয়া	উন্মুক্ত দরপত্র (OTM)
৯. দরপত্র দলিল বিক্রয় শুরুর দিন ও সময়	০১-১২-২০২৫, সকাল ৯:০০ টা
১০. দরপত্র দলিল বিক্রয়ের শেষ দিন ও সময়	০৯-১২-২০২৫, বিকাল ৪:৩০ টা পর্যন্ত
১১. প্রি-টেন্ডার মিটিং এর সময় ও স্থান	০৭-১২-২০২৫, বিকাল ৩.০০টায়, সচিবের অফিস কক্ষে, বাংলাদেশ শিল্পকলা একাডেমি, সেগুনবাগিচা, রমনা, ঢাকা।
১২. দরপত্র দাখিলের শেষ তারিখ ও সময়	১০-১২-২০২৫, দুপুর: ১২:০০টা
১৩. দরপত্র খোলার তারিখ, সময় ও স্থান	১০-১২-২০২৫, দুপুর: ১২-১০টা সচিবের দপ্তর, বাংলাদেশ শিল্পকলা একাডেমি, সেগুনবাগিচা, রমনা, ঢাকা।
১৪. প্রতি দরপত্র দলিলের মূল্য (অফেরতযোগ্য)	২,০০০/- (দুই হাজার টাকা মাত্র)
১৫. দরদাতার যোগ্যতা ও প্রয়োজনীয় দলিলাদি	১। হালনাগাদ ট্রেড লাইসেন্স, ভ্যাট নিবন্ধন সনদ, এবং হালনাগাদ আয়কর পরিশোধের প্রত্যয়নপত্র, ২। দরপত্রের যাবতীয় শর্তাবলী, নিয়মাবলী, দরপত্র সিডিউল/তফসিলে উল্লেখ আছে ৩। ক্রটিপূর্ণ/অসম্পূর্ণ দরপত্র সরাসরি বাতিল বলে গণ্য হবে। ৪। কর্তৃপক্ষ কোন কারণ দর্শানো ব্যতিরেকে যে কোন দরপত্র গ্রহণ অথবা সকল দরপত্র বাতিল করার ক্ষমতা সংরক্ষণ করেন। ৫। দরপত্রে পাবলিক প্রকিউরমেন্ট আইন ২০০৬, পাবলিক প্রকিউরমেন্ট বিধিমালা, ২০২৫ অনুযায়ী বিধি বিধান অনুসরণ করা হবে।
১৬. দরপত্রের নিরাপত্তা জামানত (ফেরতযোগ্য)	দরপত্রের সাথে যে কোন ব্যাবিজ্ঞিক ব্যাংক (সিডিউল ব্যাংক) হতে মহাপরিচালক, বাংলাদেশ শিল্পকলা একাডেমির অনুকূলে ২,৯০,০০০/- (দুই লক নব্বই হাজার) টাকা ব্যাংক ড্রাফট/পে-অর্ডার নিরাপত্তা জামানত হিসেবে দাখিল করতে হবে।
১৭. দরপত্র আহ্বানকারীর নাম	মোহাম্মদ জাকির হোসেন
১৮. দরপত্র আহ্বানকারীর পদবি	সচিব
১৯. দরপত্র আহ্বানকারীর ঠিকানা	বাংলাদেশ শিল্পকলা একাডেমি, সেগুনবাগিচা, রমনা, ঢাকা।

৩০/১১/২০২৫  
(মোহাম্মদ জাকির হোসেন)  
সচিব  
ফোন: ২২৩৩৩৮৬১৭

GD-2605



# A BRITISH WITNESS TO GENOCIDE

## Val Harding's 1971 story

ANSAR AHMED ULLAH

In April 1971, at the age of 24, Val Harding was volunteering as a nurse at a hospital in Kathmandu, Nepal, when she first heard of the atrocities on March 25 in Dhaka and the fight for the Liberation of Bangladesh. She then travelled to Kolkata with a friend, Caroline Adams, who had also been volunteering in a school in Kathmandu, and together they offered their services, working for an Indian NGO, Cathedral Relief Service, Kolkata.

In July 1971, Val volunteered for Cathedral Relief Service after attending a church service at St Paul's Cathedral in Kolkata. She had gone to the church to hear Archbishop Trevor Huddleston preach. Archbishop Trevor Huddleston was famous for his outspoken stance and active campaigning against the apartheid regime in South Africa. He was in Kolkata to show solidarity with the Bangladesh Liberation struggle. After the service, she spoke to Subhir Biswas, the vicar at St Paul's. He had just set up Cathedral Relief Service and was pleased that she and Caroline Adams were offering to volunteer, so he immediately arranged for them to join his team.

A few days later, they packed their bags and went to Kalyani, about sixty kilometres north of Kolkata, where one of the 824 refugee camps was situated. They stayed in a hostel with other members of the medical

team, a priority for her when she arrived at the camps was to learn enough Bengali to communicate and administer health care to non-English-speaking Bengali refugees. However, her presence on the medical team was welcomed, and everyone helped her to learn Bangla. As well as the everyday language she needed to do her job, she soon learnt the national anthem, Amar Sonar Bangla, which people would sing spontaneously during the day, and she joined in shouting "Joy Bangla, Mukti Bangla." Amid fear, there was hope, and singing Amar Sonar Bangla raised people's spirits.

Kalyani camp provided refuge to 50,000 people. Their daily work involved driving to one of the nine camps, setting up a mobile clinic, and seeing patients. After that, they would visit another one or two camps during the day. It was the monsoon season, and they worked through frequent downpours and, at one point, a major cyclone. Their clinics were usually held inside army tents, but if the rain stopped, they preferred working outside, beneath trees, where there was more air.

The doctors saw patients and prescribed the medicines that she then administered. She also treated body sores and wounds. When they arrived at a camp, there was usually a queue already waiting for medical treatment, and they never got to see



Val Harding (standing left) and Caroline Adams (kneeling right) with colleagues and local families during their work in the refugee-relief and reconstruction period.

became extremely hard for her to work at all if order broke down, and the doctors sometimes refused to carry on until some order had been restored. She noted in her diary, "The crowd throbs around the doctors and medicine bench. I am prodded and stroked. 'Didi moni, didi moni, amar, amar.' And everyone expects to be served at once."

At one point, they tried to hold their clinic in a cattle shed where refugees were housed. They were hoping that it might be easier to control the crowd from there and try and get people to queue up, but their efforts were thwarted by the heat inside a concrete cattle shed with no ventilation. People who were housed in these cattle sheds were also living alongside livestock. Many of the camps were row upon row of canvas army tents, neatly arranged, and these provided a better living space than the cattle sheds. Cooking took place in the open, outside the tents.

One of the hardest things for Val Harding to bear was the knowledge that their medical efforts were failing because they were prescribing medicine in a situation with extremely poor sanitation and an absence of public health care. This was not anyone's fault; it was the outcome of an overwhelming and chaotic situation. Morale was often low, and there were rumours around the camps of food and other supplies being stolen and sold by the

identified with their struggle. Local media gave a positive portrayal of the war. However, there were still tensions in 1971 since the local population often suffered from the same medical conditions as refugees, and infant mortality rates amongst the local population were as high as in the refugee camps. The Indian government was aware of these problems and argued that relief provided for refugees should be equally available to those in need from the local population, particularly in the case of severely malnourished children. In line with this policy, Val and others worked with local communities alongside the refugees.

In August 1971, Senator Edward Kennedy visited the refugee camps. He visited one of the camps at Kalyani, where Val worked. She remembers the day of excitement and a change in routine. "We closed the clinic early that day to join the throngs of people lining the road where we expected to see him. We watched him arrive in the pouring rain; he walked briefly around in the mud, and then he drove on to his next stop."

However, on a more positive note, one of the ways in which morale was boosted in the camps and back in the war zones in Bangladesh was through music and cultural activities. One such group organising cultural programmes was the Liberation team of artists, Bangladesh Mukti Shangrami Shilpi Shangstha, led by Mahmudur Rahman Benu, who sang patriotic songs and performed puppet shows and stage dramas. Although this troupe did not come to Val's camp, news of their activities reached them and boosted morale everywhere.

The Bangladesh Mukti Shangrami Shilpi Shangstha was celebrated in the film Mukti Gaan (1995), directed by the late film-maker Tareque Masud and Catherine Masud, using some original footage from 1971 shot by the American film-maker Lear Levine.

While Val worked for the medical team, Caroline Adams assisted a refugee postmaster from the Faridpur district in organising activities for children and other community events, and she also joined them sometimes in these activities. It was this side of the work that opened their eyes to the strength of feeling that people had in the just cause of their struggle, and they had hope and optimism for the future. When the war was over, in March of 1972, they travelled to the newly liberated country of Bangladesh and visited this postmaster in his village, where he had been able to return.

She noted in her diary that the postmaster said,

"The children are enjoying themselves very much that you are speaking Bengali language." Moments such as this contributed to Val and Caroline feeling positive about their work and finding more fulfilment.

Caroline Adams's parents lived in a village in Somerset, and her mother organised fundraising events for Bangladesh. She sent the donations raised from these events directly to Val and Caroline. They purchased children's clothes, household items, blankets, and other necessities that were in short supply and distributed these directly to refugees with the help of the Postmaster and other volunteers.

Towards late October 1971, as India-Pakistan tensions escalated, all foreigners were requested to leave before India's December 3 war declaration against West Pakistan. Val and Caroline went to Chennai, joyfully celebrating Bangladesh's December 16 liberation upon returning to Kolkata months later.

Because of the friendly Postmaster and his family in the camps, Val and Caroline went to the newly liberated country of Bangladesh and looked for his village in March 1972. This journey took them from Khulna to Dhaka on the paddle-steamer named 'The Rocket', a memorable journey through the Sundarbans, where they also met freedom fighters, students, and other young people on board. When they reached Dhaka, they took buses and small country boats out towards Faridpur and stayed in some houses in the countryside, invited in by hospitable families who helped along their way. Eventually, they found the village, and many surprised people came to greet them.

After visiting the Postmaster's village, they returned to Dhaka and discussed staying in Bangladesh to work again.

Bangladesh was flooded with foreign aid agencies by this time, with eighty-eight in all. They enrolled with Concern, an Irish NGO, and were soon given work in the rural area of Mirzapur, some forty miles from Dhaka. Val was assigned to a hospital ward, and Caroline was assigned to a local school.

The hospital and girls' school at Mirzapur were endowed by a local wealthy Hindu businessman who had been taken by the Pakistani army the previous summer. Val was assigned the job of training nurses in the hospital. However, she felt unprepared for this role since she was only recently qualified and an inexperienced nurse who lacked expertise. She felt that the Bengali nurses at the hospital were more knowledgeable and familiar with their local health needs than she was. She said, "However, the staff were very friendly and welcoming and were very pleased I was there, and I was happy to support the nurses and patients in whatever way I could. I worked there for two months."

In her final thoughts, she said she had never felt that her contribution in '71 was anything but welcomed by those I worked with at the time, and I have always felt gratitude ever since from the Bengali community in the UK. She made friends for life during this time and especially grew to love the music of Bengal. Later, she joined Mahmoud Rahman Benu bhai's music classes in London.

Val Harding is now 78 years old. Her work in the refugee camps had a lasting impact on her life. After witnessing the devastating aftermath of genocide in 1971, she came away with a different understanding of the world. Today, global awareness and the call for formal international recognition of the genocide in Bangladesh in 1971 is even more crucial.

Caroline Adams passed away in 2001. She was a youth and community worker in the London Borough of Tower Hamlets, where she was well known. She compiled and edited the book Across Seven Seas and Thirteen Rivers, the life stories of pioneer Bengali settlers in Britain (1987).

Ansar Ahmed Ullah is a contributor to The Daily Star.



Local volunteers and members of the Cathedral Relief Service team during their refugee-relief work.

team, who were recently qualified doctors from Presidency College in Kolkata. They were the only foreign workers on the team. She worked on the medical team while Caroline was designated a youth work role with children. Caroline worked with a volunteer refugee and a postmaster from the Faridpur district in Bangladesh.

Val had much to learn about the history of the conflict that had led to this war, the history of colonialism and Partition, the culture of India and Bengal, and the vast difference in standards of living and health care at the time between central and peripheral countries, i.e., previously colonising and colonised countries. She was on a steep learning curve.

The camps she worked in were not hit by the cholera epidemic that swept through other areas, killing 30% of the total refugee population, but they were constantly dealing with other illnesses that were the result of appalling living conditions, poor sanitation, and malnutrition, and children were regularly the worst off amongst the victims of poverty. They were also dealing with the psychological traumas that many refugees had suffered, witnessing atrocities, and they were working with women who were victims of rape. However, the medical team she worked with did not address these issues directly. They were there with a primary focus on administering physical health care.

everyone, often leaving people unattended when they left. There was only a two-day supply of medicine at a time. She remembers that most of the medicine was antibiotics. She did not think they saw many patients again, so most of them would only ever have had a two-day supply of antibiotics, which she knew was inadequate for treating infection.

Val recorded in her diary that medical supplies had dwindled after a few weeks of work, and she could only see two hundred patients a day out of the 50,000. She noted, "There are many nasty ulcers and sores - whole bodies covered in sores from scabies, babies' mouths disintegrating, sick, thin babies - they are the worst hit with septicemia."

She remembers opening a box of syringes one morning, and an army of termites ran out. Climate conditions and inadequate storage facilities frequently ruined other medical equipment and supplies. It was hard to maintain hygienic standards. She noted in her diary, "All sweet-coated pills and sugary bottles entertain a merry party of flies. Soon after the morning's medicine has started, the scene is one of total disorder: boxes, lids, prescriptions, paper, and cotton wool flies everywhere - and at the end of the morning, volunteers collapse exhausted beneath the rubble."

There was an overwhelming need and, at times, a sense of panic. It sometimes



The postmaster and his family, photographed in a 1971 refugee camp where they lived during the war and supported relief workers.

local non-refugee community. The influx of thousands of refugees took its toll on local communities.

It is well known in refugee and migration studies that often the host population takes a confrontational approach towards refugees, and there was poverty amongst the local community in this area of West Bengal. However, it has also been noted that in 1971, the local Bengali population were sympathetic towards the refugees from East Bengal and



Refugee tents at Kalyani camp, West Bengal, 1971 — one of the sites where Val Harding worked amidst monsoon floods, medicine shortages, and overwhelming human need.



# Naim bags crore as Habibur, Saqlain get rewarded

SAMSUL AREFIN KHAN

The players' auction returned to the Bangladesh Premier League (BPL) after 12 years yesterday and its comeback was not without surprises as top-order batter Mohammad Naim fetched the highest price among all local players and some young up-and-comers earned bigger bucks than the veterans.

Naim, placed in Category A with a base price of Tk 50 lakh, was roped in by Chattogram Royals for a whopping Tk 1.10 crore after winning a bidding battle against Sylhet Titans, Rangpur Riders and Noakhali Express.



4:00pm, but it started almost an hour late, as fate seemingly scripted the moment perfectly for the 26-year-old.

"Everyone was shouting when my name was sold at that price," Naim described the mood in the team bus when he was bought.

Naim, who had finished as the highest run-getter last season with 511 runs, believed his domestic performances earned him this reward.

"I performed well last year and I've been rewarded for it. That's how it should be -- those who perform should be recognised. Alhamdulillah, I am very happy.

"Even if I were sold at my base price, my dedication would remain the same. I always play with passion for whichever team I represent -- and that won't change, Inshallah."

Meanwhile, Bangladesh T20I captain

Litton Das -- the only other player in Category A -- went for significantly less than Naim, as Rangpur scooped him up for Tk 70 lakh.

The Riders had to splurge a lot more for Tawhid Hridoy, who was in Category B with a base price of Tk 35 lakh, bidding Tk 92 lakh -- the second most for a local player -- to secure his services.

Uncapped cricketers Habibur Rahman Sohan and Abdul Gaffar Saqlain, who were in Category D with a base price of Tk 18 lakh, were rewarded for their great performances for Bangladesh 'A' in the recently concluded Asia Cup Rising Stars.

Habibur went to Noakhali for Tk 50 lakh, almost three times his base price. Saqlain, a 27-year-old medium pacer who debuted in List A cricket just last year and is yet to debut at the BPL, was bought by Rajshahi Warriors for Tk 44 lakh.

Veterans Mushfikur Rahim and Mahmudullah initially went unsold from Category B. They were supposed to be recalled in the auction in Category C but upon the insistence of some franchises, were brought up again in the same category and were picked by Rajshahi and Rangpur respectively.

The franchises showed little interest for the overseas players as each team picked the minimum two. Sri Lanka's Dasun Shanaka fetched the highest amount out of the foreigners, \$55000, to play for Dhaka Capitals. Two Associate Nation players also received teams, as Sylhet Titans picked Aaron Jones (USA) and Rangpur got Emilio Gay (Italy).



Leo has accustomed us to the extraordinary, He's someone we'll never see again. Today, perhaps we're surprised that he didn't score, but he gave us peace of mind with the third goal, an assist that only he can see. He practically sealed the game.

Coach Javier Mascherano after Inter Miami beat New York City FC 5-1 to reach their first-ever MLS Cup final



Rajshahi Warriors' Nazmul Hossain Shanto leans in for a chat with Khaled Mahmud Sujon, seated beside fellow Noakhali Express official Talha Jubair, perhaps gathering some intel, as the Bangladesh Premier League 2026 player auction in Dhaka yesterday buzzed with over 400 local and overseas cricketers up for grabs and six franchises eyeing their next big catch.

PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED

## AFC U-17 ASIAN CUP QUALIFIERS

## China shatter Bangladesh's dream

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh's dream of qualifying for the AFC U-17 Asian Cup finals ended in disappointment as the boys in red and green suffered a 4-0 defeat to favourites China in their final Group A match yesterday -- a loss made heavier by two gifted goals.

Shuai Weihao netted a clinical hatrick before substitute Zhao Songyuan applied the finishing touch, shattering Bangladesh's hopes of returning to the finals for the first time since 2006.

Having travelled to China with high ambitions, the young Bangladesh side fuelled belief with four consecutive victories -- 5-0 against Timor-Leste, 8-0 against Brunei, 5-0 against Sri Lanka and 2-1 against Bahrain. Those performances raised hopes of a spirited challenge against a dominant Chinese side who entered the final match with four wins and a staggering 38 goals. Yet Bangladesh failed to maintain their momentum when it mattered most.

# Middle-order malfunction clouds World Cup build-up

EKUSH TAPADER FROM CHATTOGRAM

When Nurul Hasan Sohan walked in to bat in Chattogram on Saturday, Bangladesh needed 31 off 27 with six wickets in hand -- a routine chase by any measure. Seven balls later, the mood had shifted. What looked like a stroll in the second T20I against Ireland became an uneasy shuffle as the requirement tightened to 22 off 14.

Had Mohammad Saifuddin not struck a vital 17 off seven balls, Bangladesh might have slipped to an embarrassing defeat from a position of control and conceded the series with a match left to play.

Sohan's five off seven continued a worrying pattern -- in the recent West Indies series at home, he managed five off 10 and one off five. His hesitant technique repeatedly turns harmless deliveries into moments of tension, spreading unease through the dressing room.

Sohan was only recalled because Jaker Ali Anik had been struggling. Despite persistent failures, the management had backed Jaker, but outside his 20 off 16 in the opening match, his record remains bleak: six single-figure scores in his previous nine innings, and when he did reach double figures, he burned too many balls -- 17 off 18, 10 off 11.

For a No. 6 or 7, that sort of output is a liability.

With Jaker misfiring, Sohan returned.

With Sohan faltering, the team reverted to Jaker. The cycle feels endless. In the middle of it, Shamim Hossain Patwary -- earlier dropped after low scores -- became a flashpoint when Litton Das publicly questioned his omission. Chief selector Gazi Ashraf Hossain Lipu defended the



call, only for Shamim to be recalled for the final match. The left-hander, however, never had the platform to show much.

In truth, the failures of Jaker and Sohan reopened the door for Shamim.

By logic, Mahidul Islam Ankon -- selected specifically to be tested -- should now get his chance. Yet he appears destined to watch the series from the sidelines, another example of

the disconnect between selector plans and management preferences. Even if he debuts in the final game, how much can one outing reveal, especially with the T20 World Cup looming?

Ankon himself has not scored heavily in recent T20 competitions, but selectors still felt he was worth assessing. Their reasoning never truly aligned with the team's approach. With multiple selection issues spilling into public debate, the chief selector has gone quiet, leaving decisions firmly in management hands.

Those decisions orbit one unresolved dilemma: who is the least risky option? Bangladesh's middle and lower-middle order have slumped for over a year. Even when runs have come, they have lacked impact, and self-preserving batting has often worsened situations.

Bangladesh hoped the Ireland series would offer clarity ahead of the World Cup. It has not. The middle-order puzzle remains unsolved, and the discomfort lingers. The upcoming Bangladesh Premier League (BPL) may throw up temporary solutions, but the gulf between BPL and the international circuit makes snap judgements perilous.

The Tigers now look set to enter another World Cup with familiar uncertainties in key positions -- another turn in the same cycle of muddled planning.

## SHORT CORNER

### HC questions legality of disparity in salaries, benefits between male and female footballers

The High Court yesterday issued a rule asking the authorities concerned to explain why the discrimination in salaries, benefits, and opportunities between male and female footballers should not be declared illegal. The bench of Justice Sikder Mahmudur Razi and Justice Raziuddin Ahmed issued the rule following a writ petition filed as a public interest litigation by Supreme Court lawyers Barrister Sumaiya Binta Tanvir and Barrister Ariza Mehelee Khan seeking necessary directives.

### BCB plans to start Women's BPL soon, says Bulbul

Bangladesh Cricket Board president Aminul Islam Bulbul has announced that they are planning to start the Women's Bangladesh Premier League very soon. The announcement was made during the BPL 12 players' auction at the Radisson Blue Water Garden Hotel in Dhaka on Sunday afternoon.

### Man Utd win at Palace

Joshua Zirkzee scored his first Premier League goal for nearly a year before Mason Mount grabbed the winner as Manchester United came from behind to beat Crystal Palace 2-1 on Sunday.

*\*\*Read the full stories on The Daily Star website*



India superstar Virat Kohli set Ranchi alight with his 52nd ODI century, a 120-ball 135 featuring 11 fours and seven sixes, to power India to 349-8, leading to a 17-run win, in the first of three ODIs against South Africa yesterday. His sixth ton against the Proteas -- the most by any player against them -- moved him past Sachin Tendulkar and David Warner, who have five each. Kohli shared a 136-run stand with Rohit Sharma, whose 51-ball 57 marked his 60th ODI fifty. Rohit struck five fours and three sixes, becoming the all-time leading six-hitter in ODIs by overtaking Shahid Afridi's tally of 351. He also tops the six-hitting charts in T20Is with 205 maximums.

PHOTO: AFP

## FIH JUNIOR HOCKEY WC

# Bangladesh fight back to draw against Korea

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh produced a remarkable comeback in the FIH Hockey Men's Junior (U-21) World Cup on Sunday, fighting back from three goals down to snatch a 3-3 draw against strong South Korea in their second Pool F match at the Mayor Radhakrishnan Hockey Stadium in Tamil Nadu, India.

Penalty-corner specialist Amirul Islam was the hero once again, dragging the men in red and green back into the contest with three penalty-corner goals, completing his second consecutive hatrick after scoring another treble against Australia on the opening day. The feat also lifted Amirul, adjudged player of the match for the second game, to the top of the tournament's goal-scoring chart with six goals, level with New Zealand's Jonty Elmes.

Bangladesh had earmarked South Korea as the team to catch as soon as the groupings were announced in late June, with the realistic target of finishing third in the pool and earning a chance for a higher ranking in the classification matches. Their spirited performance against



Australia on Saturday had further strengthened belief that a first-ever victory at any level of a hockey World Cup was within reach. Korea's 11-1 thrashing against France on the opening day also raised expectations.

However, it was South Korea who struck first. Still recovering from their heavy defeat, the Koreans started aggressively, with Minhyeok Lee converting a penalty corner in the eighth minute. Seunghan Son doubled the lead with another penalty-corner strike five minutes later, before Minhyeok added his second from a penalty stroke as Korea went into halftime leading 3-0.

Bangladesh responded brilliantly after the break. Displaying admirable grit and discipline, they mounted a spirited fightback through the relentless precision of Amirul's drag flicks -- scoring in the 36th, 46th and 56th minutes to complete the comeback and leave the field with heads held high.

The draw keeps Bangladesh in third position in the four-team Pool F on goal difference, with one match left -- a challenging fixture against France on December 2.





## Unfairly treated armed forces officers will get justice: Yunus

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus yesterday pledged justice for members of the army, navy, and air force who were unfairly treated under the previous administration, alongside other deprived government officials and employees.

He made the remarks after receiving a report from the committee formed to review appeals of retired and dismissed officers of the armed forces who faced discrimination, deprivation, injustice, and

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Thick black smoke from the burner of a bitumen mixer in the Bypass area of Sylhet's South Surma blows over the road. Because of the strong smell of melting bitumen used for road repair, locals have to cover their noses and mouths passing the area.

## A big step towards judicial independence

Govt issues ordinance; CJ to have overall control, financial authority

ASHUTOSH SARKAR

The government yesterday issued an ordinance to establish the long-desired Supreme Court secretariat with a view to ensuring full independence of the judiciary.

Under the directive from the president, the law ministry issued the Supreme Court Secretariat Ordinance, 2025 incorporating the provisions for keeping overall control of the secretariat and its financial issues with the chief justice.

With this, the long-cherished dream of establishing a separate secretariat for the judiciary has finally been realised, thanks to the positive cooperation of the interim government, said the SC administration in a press release.

The secretary of the SC secretariat will be its administrative head as it will perform all administrative and secretarial duties related to the supervision and control of subordinate courts and administrative tribunals for the purpose of assisting the SC in the administration of justice in the country.

Besides, the ordinance has a provision for constituting an SC Secretariat Commission led by the chief justice to develop the judicial administration and issue the necessary directives and suggestions to enhance the potential of the judiciary.

The commission will fix its own work procedures. The other members of the commission are the law minister or law adviser, a judge from the Appellate Division, nominated by the chief justice, the National Human Rights Commission chairperson and the attorney general.

The chief justice will have overall control of the SC secretariat, which will have one secretary and other officers and employees. The secretary will enjoy the status and privileges of a senior secretary.

The SC secretariat must prepare its statement of estimated income and expenditure for the courts, institutions and offices at least three months before the beginning of that financial year. There will be a separate statement of estimated income and expenditure for the Supreme Court.

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## 3 killed, 9 hurt in clash over land dispute

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Kurigram

Three people were killed and at least nine others injured yesterday in a violent clash over a long-running land dispute in Kurigram's Nageshwari upazila.

The dead are Ershad Ali, 42, his aunt Kulshum Begum, 55, and Kawser Mia, 32.

Locals said the dispute over a 16-decimal piece of land in Dhoni Gaglia village of Santoshpur Union had simmered for years between Ershad and neighbour Altaf Hossain, with both families claiming ownership.

Tensions boiled over around 11:30am when an argument over land demarcation

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### 16 DAYS OF ACTIVISM

## AI fuelling cyber violence against women

Experts warn justice system ill-equipped to handle digital crimes

NILIMA JAHAN

Niva (not her real name), 26, is an IT specialist who has spent years training students at a reputed Narayanganj institute to navigate technology.

Yet it was technology that became the source of her trauma and humiliation.

It began in September after a minor argument with students during a routine training session. A few days later, she discovered photos of her and her husband, previously posted on Facebook, digitally altered with obscenities and circulated across multiple groups.

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### PURBACHAL PLOTS

## Verdict in case against Hasina, Rehana, Tulip today

EMRUL HASAN BAPPI

A special court is set to deliver a verdict today in the case filed over the Dhaka's Purbachal plot scam against 17 people, including deposed prime minister Sheikh Hasina, her sister Sheikh Rehana, and niece British MP Tulip Siddiq.

This will be the fourth verdict involving Hasina and Purbachal graft cases.

SEE PAGE 8 COL 1

## Invitation for Bids (IFB)

"01 December 2025"  
"Bangladesh"

"Procurement of CNG Single Decker AC Buses for BRTC"  
"340 Single Decker AC Buses with Spare Parts, Maintenance Equipment and Related Services"  
"Loan/Credit No.: BGD-30"

- The Bangladesh Road Transport Corporation (BRTC) has received (or where appropriate, "has applied for") a Loan from the Export-Import Bank of Korea from the resources of the Economic Development Cooperation Fund (EDCF) of the Republic of Korea in the amount of US\$77,441 thousand toward the cost of Procurement of CNG Single Decker AC Buses for BRTC and intends to apply a portion of the proceeds of this loan to payments under the contract for BRTC/CNG Bus Procurement/EDCF/ 2025.
- The Project Executing Agency now invites sealed bids from eligible bidders for 340 RHD Dedicated CNG Single Decker AC Buses in Completely Built-up (CBU) Condition, Spare Parts, Maintenance Equipment and Related Services.
- Bidding will be conducted through Competitive Bidding (CB) procedures specified in the Guideline for Procurement under EDCF Loans and are open to all eligible bidders (in case of Joint Venture-JV) that meet the following minimum qualification criteria.

The Bidder, and all JV partners constituting the Bidder (in case of Joint Venture-JV), shall have the nationality of the Republic of Korea or juridical person incorporated and registered therein. The Bidder shall meet following qualification criteria set by the Purchaser on a pass-fail i.e. responsive-non-responsive basis. Otherwise, the Bidder (in case of Joint Venture-JV) will be disqualified.

### A. Contractual Experience:

The Bidder (or Supplier) must satisfy the following qualification criteria (in case of Joint Venture, at least one partner in the JV):

- The Bidder shall have a minimum of twenty (20) years of overall experience in the supply of goods (bus, automobile, or motor vehicle) and related services; and
- Successful completion of supply of (i) accumulated minimum 200 units of RHD Diesel Bus with (Completely Built-up (CBU) condition and/or Rolling Chassis) to overseas within the last twenty (20) years from IFB issuance, and (ii) accumulated minimum of 340 units of CNG bus to overseas with minimum US\$30 million within the last twenty (20) years from IFB issuance. The (i) and (ii) both are met.

Note: (a) Within the last twenty (20) years from IFB issuance, a list of previous supplied RHD Diesel Bus (CBU and/or Rolling Chassis), and CNG bus should be attached with the offer showing number, types, country, description and delivery date.

(b) Documentary evidences (like contract agreements, performances certificate/end user certificate, purchaser certificate, etc.) of such supply experience of the supplier should be submitted with the Bid.

### B. Manufacture Experience:

The Manufacturer (in case of more than one manufacturer, at least one manufacturer) shall demonstrate that it has;

- a minimum of twenty (20) years of overall experience in manufacturing both (i) RHD Diesel Buses (Completely Built-up condition and/or Rolling Chassis) and (ii) CNG Buses.
- experience in manufacturing of (i) accumulated minimum 200 units of RHD Diesel Bus (Completely Built-up condition and/or Rolling Chassis) having been exported to overseas within the last twenty (20) years from IFB issuance, and (ii) accumulated minimum of 340 units of CNG bus having been exported to overseas within the last twenty (20) years from IFB issuance. The (i) and (ii) both are met.

Note: (a) Within the last twenty (20) years from IFB issuance, a list of previous supplied RHD Diesel Bus (CBU and/or Rolling Chassis), and CNG bus should be attached with the offer showing number, types, country, description and delivery date.

(b) Documentary evidences (like contract agreements, performances certificate/end user certificate, purchaser certificate, etc.) of such experience of the manufacturer should be submitted with the Bid.

### C. Manufacture Capacity:

The Manufacturer (in case of more than one manufacturer, at least one manufacturer) shall demonstrate that it has a minimum production capacity of manufacturing minimum 250 RHD dedicated CNG Single AC Decker buses per year.

Note: The manufacturer shall have adequate plant and manufacturing capacity to manufacture and supply of the RHD dedicated CNG Single Decker AC Buses within the delivery schedule offered by the Client/Purchaser. Documentary evidence of such plant and manufacturing capacity of the manufacturer to be submitted with the Bid

### D. FINANCIAL SITUATION:

#### 1) Financial Performance:

Submission of audited balance sheets or, if not required by the law of the Bidder's country, other financial statements acceptable to the Purchaser, for the last 3 years by the Bidder (in case of JV, each partner's) to demonstrate the current soundness of the Bidders financial position and its prospective long-term profitability. As a minimum, a Bidder's (in case of Joint Venture, each partner's) net worth calculated as the difference between total assets and total liabilities should be positive.

#### 2) Financial Resources:

Bidder's availability of or access to liquid assets, lines of credit, and other finances sufficient to meet any possible cash flow requirement, supporting the manufacturer or supplier for supplying of 340 RHD Dedicated CNG Single Decker AC Buses under the contract to be submitted/provided.

#### 3) Pending Litigation:

All pending litigation shall be treated as resolved against the Bidder and so shall in total not represent more than eighty percent (80%) of the Bidder's (in case of JV, each partner's) net worth of the year.

- The Purchaser will form the TSC (Technical Sub Committee) and the TEC (Tender Evaluation Committee) to review and evaluate the technical proposal submitted by the Bidders according to the Specification and Qualification Criteria. Only the Bidders, which are qualified in technical proposal evaluation will be evaluated for the Bid Price. The lowest evaluated price quoted by the technically responsive bidder will be considered by the TEC (Tender Evaluation Committee) for awarding the contract.

- Interested eligible Bidders may obtain further information from Bangladesh Road Transport Corporation (BRTC) and inspect the bidding documents at the address below from 10:00am to 4:00pm.

- A complete set of bidding documents may be purchased by any interested Bidders on the submission of a written application to the Project Director and upon payment of a nonrefundable fee of US\$300.00. The method of payment will be direct deposit on the Bank Account No. 1604802001108 in USD opened at Sonali Bank PLC, Rajuk Bhaban Branch, Dhaka, Bangladesh in the name of PROKALPA PARICHALOK O PARICHALOK KARIGORI BRTC, Designated Account, Swift Code: BSONBDDHWEB. The document will be sent by soft copy. The soft copy of the bidding document will be distributed to the purchaser (Bidder) after the receipt of bidder's request and proof of payment.

- Bids must be delivered to the address below at or before 12:00 noon BST on 29 January 2026. All bids must be accompanied by a bid security of US\$1,000,000.00. Late bids shall be rejected. Bids will be opened in the presence of the Bidder's (in case of Joint Venture (JV)) representatives who choose to attend at the address below at 12:30pm BST on 29 January 2026.

Attention: Project Director (Director -Technical, BRTC).  
Address: BRTC Head Office, Conference Room, 21, Rajuk Avenue, Dhaka -1000, Bangladesh.  
E-mail address: dirtechnical@brtc.gov.bd/dtbrtc1974@gmail.com

- The Bangladesh Road Transport Corporation (BRTC) will not be responsible for any costs or expenses incurred by Bidders (in case of Joint Venture (JV)) in connection with the preparation or delivery of Bids.

- The procuring entity reserves the right to reject all bids or assess the bid proceedings.

  
Project Director  
&  
Director (Technical)  
BRTC