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Tarique's return rests on Khaleda's health condition

He is waiting for Khaleda to be fit for London travel: Fakhrul

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

BNP acting chairman Tarique Rahman's decision to return home from London depends on Khaleda Zia's condition and the possibility of taking her abroad for treatment.

"If Khaleda Zia's health condition remains unchanged, Tarique Rahman will return to Bangladesh soon," BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir was quoted in a post on the party's verified Facebook page last night.

To provide further support to the medical board overseeing Khaleda's treatment, two additional teams of specialist doctors -- one from the United Kingdom and another from China -- are expected to arrive today, according to the BNP media cell.

Her personal physician, AZM Zahid Hossain, yesterday said Khaleda is able to continue receiving treatment, or, as he phrased it, "she is able to maintain her treatment".

Speaking to reporters outside Evercare Hospital in the afternoon, Zahid said Khaleda is not yet fit to travel, and any decision to take her abroad for treatment will depend on the medical board's assessment.



Mobile phone traders blocked the road in front of Jamuna Future Park in the capital for hours yesterday, demanding reforms to the National Equipment Identity Register, an end to monopolistic syndicates, and the opening of the market for unrestricted mobile phone imports. The blockade caused significant suffering to commuters. PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

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BNP chief 'maintaining treatment'
Specialists from UK, China due today
SSF deployed at Evercare
Party urges caution against rumours



Chiefs of 3 services visit Khaleda

Enquire about her health

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Chiefs of the three services visited BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia at the capital's Evercare Hospital last night.

According to Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR), army chief General Waker-Uz-Zaman, navy chief Admiral M Nazmul Hassan, and Air Chief Marshal Hasan Mahmood Khan visited the former prime minister.

BNP media cell member Shayrul Kabir Khan said the three chiefs arrived at the hospital around 9:00pm to see the party chairperson and enquired about her health from the medical board. They left at 9:20pm, reports BSS.

On November 23, the 80-year-old BNP chief, who has long been suffering from various diseases, was taken to Evercare Hospital after experiencing breathing difficulties.

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SECONDARY SCHOOLS Teachers call off strike, exams back on track

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Annual examinations at nearly 700 government secondary schools will resume today after two days as the teachers called off their work abstention last night.

The two-day strike affected more than 5.5 lakh students and disrupted annual and pre-test examinations in almost all districts.

In a statement, the Bangladesh Government Secondary Teachers' Association said the work abstention was being temporarily withdrawn in the interest of students.

Annual examinations are crucial for students' academic progress and the uncertainty surrounding the tests had caused significant stress for students and parents.

"Recognising this pressure, and out of a sense of responsibility, we have decided to return to academic duties. We believe it is one of our key responsibilities to safeguard students' futures and bring their academic life back to its normal course," it added.

The association expects the authorities to take swift and effective steps to realise their legitimate demands, so that academic activities do not face further disruption.

Teachers have been demanding upgrading assistant teachers to grade 9 under the BCS (General Education) cadre by establishing a Directorate of Secondary Education, resolving pending promotions and postings, granting due timescale and selection grade benefits, and restoring advance increments withdrawn in 2015.

The teachers continued their boycott for the second day yesterday, despite three separate letters from the Directorate The

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Basu Bahini: The fierce guerrilla force in the haor

AHMAD ISTIAK

In the wide waters of the Kishoreganj haor, where the tall grasses stand like watchmen, an unlikely guerrilla force rose during Bangladesh's Liberation War under the leadership of Abdul Motalib Basu,



TALES OF FREEDOM

once the feared "Bhorsa Dakat". His band, later known as the Basu Bahini, began with his own followers and grew to more than 300 fighters across nine upazilas in three districts.

Some of their stories are documented in Jahangir Alam Jahan's Kishoreganj Jelar Muktiyuddher Itihas, and in the memories of those who lived beside them. In May this year, this reporter travelled through five upazilas in

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Only army can bring peace in CHT

Says Iftekharuzzaman

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Transparency International Bangladesh Executive Director Iftekharuzzaman thinks that bringing peace to the hilly regions and ensuring the rights of indigenous people is mainly in the hands of the army.

"The hilly region is under the authority of the Bangladesh Army. They are the ones who can establish peace," he said.

He added that the people expect the army to take visible steps towards peace. "If they move away from the ongoing divide and rule situation and take real steps based on facts and events, then it is possible for them to establish peace."

He made the remarks at the TIB office in the capital's Dhanmondi after the launch of a research report titled, "Inclusion of Indigenous Communities in Social Safety Programmes: Challenges of Good Governance and Ways Forward." Responding to a question from a "The



SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

The struggle to cope with rising salinity, depleting sweet water, and diminishing livelihoods continues on the frontlines of climate change in the rural southwest. This is the 4th of a 5-part series.

How salinity sank Satkhira farmers' harvests

Crop fields disappear as saltwater invasion forces them to switch to shrimp farming

WASIM BIN HABIB, back from Satkhira

On the outer edge of the Sundarbans, Abdul Majed Sarkar once found solace in his modest patch of land. The four-bigha plot he inherited from his father had long been his anchor -- a fertile stretch in Satkhira's Burigoalini union where he grew rice for decades.

"The landscape used to be lush green, extending as far as the eye could see," recalls the 84-year-old, his voice tinged with nostalgia.

"Paddy would sway in the wind. The harvest was enough to feed our family, and we still had some left to sell."

But by the mid-1990s, Majed and his neighbours began noticing a subtle yet troubling shift. Rice plants withered, yields fell, and shrimp farming began taking over neighbouring fields.

Today, the land where Majed once grew rice lies submerged beneath a murky, grey-green sheet of water. It has been transformed into a shrimp enclosure, locally known as gher.

"Initially, there were only a few ponds. But slowly, they spread. I tried growing rice for six or seven more years, but eventually, I had to give up. The land changed, and we had to adapt," Majed says, gazing out from his home in Paschim Porakatl village of Shyamnagar upazila.

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Saltwater has overtaken vast stretches of farmland in Satkhira, where once-thriving rice fields and freshwater ponds have been replaced by shrimp enclosures. At least 1.53 lakh hectares of land have been affected by salinity, leaving thousands of farmers struggling to grow crops. The photo was taken from Burigoalini in Satkhira's Shyamnagar recently. PHOTO: HABIBUR RAHMAN



Satkhira covers an area of 3.81 lakh hectares

Shrimp cultivated on 73,000 hectares

Aus acreage plunged to 6,610 hectares from 12,265 in 15yrs

Aman acreage fell to 88,650 hectares from 104,820

Soil salinity exceeded tolerable level in at least 3 upazilas

People won't vote for corrupt representatives, extortionists

Says Islami Andolan ameer
OUR CORRESPONDENT, Barishal

People will not vote for corrupt people and extortionists in the upcoming national election, said Islami Andolan Bangladesh Ameer Mufti Syed Muhammad Rezaul Karim.

"Corrupted individuals and extortionists will have no place in Bangladesh. People will reject them through their votes," he said while speaking as chief guest at the Barishal divisional rally of the like-minded eight parties at Barishal's Bell's Park.

The country would get rid of extortion, injustice, violence and money laundering, if the Islamic parties are voted to power, he said.

"We have seen BNP, Awami League and Jatiya Party, but we have not seen Islam. For once, bring us to parliament for the sake of Islam. If that happens, no more mothers will lose their sons, there will be no extortion, and no armed thugs," said Rezaul.

At the end of his speech, Rezaul prayed for immediate recovery of political leaders, including BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia.



Despite multiple eviction drives at various times, encroachers have again erected illegal structures over the Kutubkhali canal in the capital's Jatrabari. Unabated encroachment and continuous dumping of solid waste have long plagued the canal. The photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON

CONVICTION OF TULIP ACC defends trial process

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Anti Corruption Commission yesterday issued a clarification following concerns raised in recent media reports about the trial and sentencing of UK Labour MP Tulip Siddiq.

The ACC in its statement said it reviewed all prosecution materials filed against Tulip in corruption cases involving her and members of the former prime minister's family.

It said Tulip was allotted an additional plot during her aunt's tenure as head of government and the case is pending. Ousted prime minister Hasina, her sister Rehana and their children, including Tulip, absconded to evade trial, it said.

The commission said in special case no. 18, Tulip was found guilty of influencing her aunt to secure land for her mother and siblings. The prosecution examined 32 witnesses, several of whom testified under oath that Tulip used her influence to have the plot allotted. Their testimonies, along with circumstantial evidence, showed she was "deeply involved in the illegal process".

According to the statement, such actions constitute abetment under several sections of the Penal Code and the Prevention of Corruption Act, 1947.

It added that Tulip obtained a plot in Gulshan by wielding influence over her aunt.

The ACC said Tulip had also been linked to London properties purchased through offshore companies. It rejected her claim that she was unable to respond to the charges, saying she had the opportunity to attend the trial but declined to appear or appoint representation, leading to her being tried in absentia.

Deposed prime minister Sheikh Hasina, her sister Sheikh Rehana and her niece Tulip Siddiq were sentenced in absentia on Monday over corruption in the allocation of Purbachal plots. Tulip Siddiq told The Guardian that the ruling "deserves contempt" and called the entire process "flawed and farcical".

Only army can bring peace in CHT

FROM PAGE 1

journalist, Iftekharuzzaman said he has already informed the government clearly and in writing that this is the time for the army to reflect on its role.

"The Bangladesh Army has proudly played a role in peacekeeping missions in 169 countries. The people of the country, including me, are proud of this. At this moment, the Bangladesh Army is working in at least 10 countries to help establish peace and is making significant contributions that have received international recognition."

He questioned why the army cannot establish peace in a part of Bangladesh that is already under its own authority. He said the army should answer this question itself.

"It is an opportunity for the army to improve its national and international acceptance, credibility, and respect."

The TIB executive director added that the army is capable of bringing peace to the hill tracts on its own initiative, even without support from the government.

"I believe that if the army has the will, all parts of the Chittagong Hill Tracts Peace Accord can be implemented.

No past government has been able to do this. Even the most powerful and authoritarian government that ruled the country for the last 15 years could not do it."

The authority necessary for establishing peace will only work if the army decides to make real efforts, Iftekharuzzaman added.

TIB Research fellow Razia Sultana presented the research findings at the event on the challenges indigenous communities face in accessing social safety net programmes.

According to the study, indigenous people in both the plains and the hilly areas often remain excluded from government support schemes.

Many do not get accurate information about available services and face discrimination, corruption, and administrative complexities.

The report said language barriers, poor communication facilities, mobile network problems, and limited internet access cause serious difficulties.

In many places, officials do not follow proper rules while selecting beneficiaries, leaving vulnerable indigenous households without

assistance.

The report added that poverty, land loss, political influence, social inequality, and geographical isolation further increase vulnerability.

Many families lack the required documents, such as national identity cards or birth certificates, which prevent them from enrolling in social safety programmes.

Some applicants face harassment, delays, and demands for bribes. Others avoid applying because they fear discrimination or feel discouraged by repeated refusals.

TIB, the Bangladesh chapter of the Germany-based global anti-graft watchdog, recommended ensuring fair access to services, improving coordination among government bodies, increasing the use of information technology, and raising awareness among local officials.

The organisation urged the government to include indigenous voices in decision-making, strengthen monitoring, and ensure transparency.

It also called for long-term planning to make social safety schemes more inclusive and effective.

Basu Bahini: The fierce guerrilla force

FROM PAGE 1

Kishoreganj and Habiganj and spoke to at least 25 fighters and villagers who once sought shelter under their protection.

Before the war, Basu had been a notorious robber, jailed in Kishoreganj in several murder cases. When students and youths broke open the prison at the end of March, he returned to Gurui village in Nikli and rallied his men and any local willing to fight.

After the Pakistani army captured Bajitpur on April 18, 1971, Sangram Committee member Prof Yakub Mia summoned Basu to his home in Chhaychira.

Bahini member Abdul Wahab, 77, told The Daily Star that Prof Yakub initially hesitated to trust a former dacoit, but confidence grew. The first camp was set up at the Gurui Union Parishad with 45 fighters.

In May, the Basu Bahini trained for two weeks at Ujlabar camp in Belabo, Narsingdi, then based themselves in a house in Hilchia near Gurui. They opened their operations by killing two notorious collaborators in the haor, according to the book.

From there, actions unfolded in quick succession: the June 25 attack on Bajitpur Police Station; the July 20 operation on Nikli Thana; the battles at Scaldah crematorium on July 25 and Manikkali Duilja Bridge on July 30; and the National Bank operation in Bajitpur.

Before dawn on June 25, hundreds of Basu Bahini fighters surrounded the Bajitpur Police Station, where Pakistani forces and Razakars took shelter.

Abdul Hekim, 82, a member of the Basu Bahini, recalled, "A seven-hour battle raged until the Razakars and police ran out of ammunition and fled through a tunnel to the OC's house, where they were captured." Crowds then stormed the market, seized the captives, and beat them to death.

Around the same time, Basu's men blew up the railway bridge between Gachihata and Manikkhali in Katiadi to disrupt Pakistani movements.

In mid-July, Basu's men escorted the wife and children of war-time acting President Syed Nazrul Islam from Nikli towards India. Razakars ambushed them at Ratari Haor in Sunamganj, but eight Razakars were killed in a counter attack and one was captured, said Wahab.

On September 6, disoriented by the Bahini's repeated strikes, Pakistani soldiers and Razakars entered Gurui by launch, looting and burning homes. After villagers alerted the Hilchia

camp, 20-25 fighters ambushed them, killing five soldiers, said Yusuf Ali, another member of the Bahini.

"When our fighters ran out of ammunition and withdrew, the army torched homes and massacred at least 25 villagers in Gurui Bazar. As they retreated by launch, 40-50 of our men attacked again, killing 15-16 Pakistani soldiers and Razakars. After that, Gurui, Hilchia, and nearby villages became liberated areas," Yusuf said.

Other Basu Bahini battles included the Bagamara Bridge operation; attacks at Nikli and Madan thanas; attacks on Pakistani trawlers at Chhatirchar; the Sarachar train

Razakars and Al Badr surrendered on December 17," he said.

The Basu Bahini surrendered their weapons to the Kishoreganj subdistrict administration on January 26, 1972.

SAKINA BEGUM: COOK TO SPY
Among them was Sakhina Begum. She spoke with The Daily Star just two weeks before she died in June 2025 at the age of 93. She began as a cook in the Hilchia camp and then became a spy for the freedom fighters. Detained twice by the Pakistani army and Razakars, but she escaped both times.

"After my nephew, freedom fighter Matiur Rahman, was killed at Nikli,



Abdul Motalib Basu



Sakhina Begum



Yusuf Ali



Abdul Wahab

operation; the killing of Razakars in Ashtagram; and the eventual liberation of Kishoreganj town.

Their most decisive fight came at Nikli Thana, where 30 Pakistani soldiers died and four freedom fighters were martyred. Pakistani troops, police, and Al-Badr men had strengthened the thana and the adjacent Razakar base at Nikli Gorachand High School. On October 14, Razakars surrounded a reconnaissance team; when the Bahini intervened, the Razakars withdrew.

"Basu then planned a full assault with four companies. They encircled the station on October 15-16 and from October 17 began attacking identified positions," Freedom fighter Wahab said.

On October 19, with the Pakistanis exhausted and several freedom fighters dead, the Bahini launched a final assault. The Pakistanis fled toward Sunamganj, leaving more than 30 bodies behind.

By early December, as Pakistani forces retreated from Kishoreganj to Mymensingh, the Basu Bahini attacked their stronghold at Kaliachapra Sugar Mill on December 11. Razakars ambushed them near the WAPDA office, killing several fighters.

Rafique Master, 73, who fought alongside the Bahini, said they surrounded Kishoreganj town with other regional fighters and battled for four days from December 12. Several freedom fighters and more than 50 Razakars were killed. "The

I took a vow to fight. When three Razakars were captured in Bajitpur, I brought them to Hilchia camp and hacked all three to death," she said.

She said she later killed two more Razakars with the same dagger, now kept at the Liberation War Museum.

THE BASU FAMILY
Despite 25 criminal cases, Basu received general amnesty for his wartime role. He joined the Awami League in 1972, but a faction rejected him. Later that year, members of that faction shot him and drowned his body in the Ghoraurta River.

He left behind his wife, two sons, and a daughter. Today, his ailing wife and daughter live in a small tin house in Gurui; all family property was seized after his death. When this reporter visited in May, his wife lay on the floor on a torn kantha. His daughter, Rahima Khatun, 58, widowed within three years of marriage, works as a domestic help in her village while also caring for her mother.

Basu's son Nazrul, 60, used the freedom fighter's allowance to build his own tin house. The mother and daughter said they do not receive any monthly allowance either.

Researcher Sukhen Dutta, who has spent 12 years studying the Basu Bahini, said: "The Liberation War transformed a notorious robber into a man wholly devoted to his motherland. The contribution of the Basu Bahini in the haor battles deserves to be written in golden letters."

Tarique's return rests on Khaleda's health condition

FROM PAGE 1

yet to request a "travel pass".

"It will be issued as soon as he asks for it," Touhid said while talking to reporters in the capital.

Regarding security concerns for Tarique, Home Adviser Lt Gen (ret'd) Jahangir Alam Chowdhury said the home ministry is ready to provide special protection to anyone who requires it.

'AVOID RUMOURS'

Talking to the reporters, Zahid, on behalf of Khaleda's family and the party, urged everyone not to pay attention to or spread any rumours about her health.

He also appealed to journalists to remain patient, saying, "You have stood by us... With your support and by the grace of Allah, Madam Khaleda Zia will recover."

Zahid said only he and party leader Ruhul Kabir Rizvi are authorised to brief the media on Khaleda's health.

"I request everyone not to listen to statements from anyone else about her condition, as that only fuels rumours."

SSF PROTECTION

Members of the Special Security Force (SSF) and President's Guard Regiment (PGR) were deployed at Evercare Hospital yesterday, a day after the government declared

Khaleda a "very, very important person" or "VVIP".

In the early hours, police set up a barricade outside the hospital and took positions at the main entrance.

For security and travel convenience, the government has declared her a "VVIP".

Worried and anxious party activists gathered outside the hospital throughout the day yesterday to enquire about Khaleda's health, despite repeated instructions from the BNP not to crowd the area.

Jamaat-e-Islami Ameer Shafiqur Rahman was among those who visited the hospital yesterday. After his visit, he said, "I feel some comfort, as I was able to see her with my own eyes. We are praying for her recovery."

PRAYERS

The advisory council, chaired by Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus, in a special meeting, decided that the government would extend any assistance necessary for Khaleda's treatment.

During the meeting yesterday, prayers were offered for Khaleda's recovery, and the nation was urged to pray for her as well.

Meanwhile, at different parts of the country, special prayers were offered for her swift recovery.

How salinity sank Satkhira farmers' harvests

FROM PAGE 1

The once-thriving rice fields and freshwater fish farms of Satkhira's coastal plains, crisscrossed by rivers and canals, are disappearing amid an advancing tide of salinity, driven by rising seas, cyclones, tidal surges, and a changing climate.

As harvests dwindled and profits shrank, shrimp cultivation crept in, promising quick returns but deepening the crisis. Vast stretches of farmland, ponds, and canals are now saturated with salt, forcing thousands of farmers like Majed to abandon traditional crops.

According to the Department of Agricultural Extension (DAE), Satkhira, comprising seven upazilas, covers an area of 3.81 lakh hectares, of which 2.26 lakh hectares are arable land.

At least 1.53 lakh hectares, including 73,000 hectares used for shrimp farming, have been affected by varying degrees of salinity.

Salinity levels in both soil and water fluctuate with the change of seasons, rising in the dry months and dropping during the monsoon.

A recent report by the Satkhira office of Soil Resources Development Institute shows soil salinity has increased sharply over the past five years.

Take Shyamnagar, for instance. Salinity in the soil was measured at 3.9 deciSiemens per metre (dS/m) in the upazila in January 2021 against the tolerable limit of 6 dS/m. It doubled to 8.12 dS/m in the same month this year, according to the report.

If soil salinity levels exceed 4 dS/m, crop yields begin to fall.

Farmers say last year's harvest was severely hit by salinity.

"I cultivated rice on 20 bighas of land. But excessive salinity ruined about 20 percent of the crop, resulting in a significant financial loss," said Mohammad Alauddin, a farmer in Kaliganj.

Rice cultivation in Satkhira has been in decline over the past 15 years, according to data from the DAE Satkhira office.

Aus acreage plunged from 12,265 hectares in 2010 to 6,610 hectares last year. Aman cultivation also shrank, dropping from 104,820 hectares to

88,650 hectares over the same period. However, Boro acreage saw a rise, edging up from 73,640 hectares to 80,795 hectares.

PUSH TOWARDS SHRIMP FARMING

Branded as "white gold", shrimp farming took root in the 1980s in three southwestern districts - Satkhira, Khulna and Bagerhat. With hopes of high profits and export earnings, farmers embraced farming of tiger shrimp (bagda) and giant freshwater prawns (golda), sparking an unplanned boom that reshaped the landscape.

Wealthy and politically influential landowners started carving out massive ponds, often breaching embankments to draw saline river water into the fields. Soon, vast stretches of farmland were converted into ghers in Shyamnagar, Kaliganj, Debhata and Assasuni of Satkhira.

With shrimp enclosures multiplying, saline water seeped into fields. Freshwater ecosystems that sustained generations of farmers began collapsing. As repeated attempts to grow crops failed and the lure of quick income grew stronger, many farmers switched to shrimp farming.

"As plot after plot was turned into shrimp enclosures, I simply could not help but shift to aquaculture," said Akbar Hossain from Paschim Singhortoli village.

A septuagenarian from Burigoalini said that wealthy locals bought - and in some cases grabbed - land and water bodies for ghers.

Repeated cyclones and tidal surges over the last couple of decades worsened the crisis, breaching embankments and inundating fields with saline water. In the aftermath, many struggled to grow crops and turned to shrimp farming instead.

"We were badly hit by cyclone Aila in 2009 when my land had been submerged for months. Then, cyclone Amphan made things worse. I started shrimp farming by taking loans, just to survive," said Anwar Hossain, a resident of Pratapnagar in Shyamnagar upazila.

Women have been among the worst affected. Many who once planted, weeded and harvested paddies now collect shrimp fry in brackish waters or

AVIJIT MURDER Convict on death row was forcibly disappeared, alleges brother

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The brother of Mozammel Hossain Saimon, on death row for murdering writer-blogger Avijit Roy, yesterday said that law enforcers have illegally confined him, threatened to kill him in "crossfire" and coerced him into making a false confession.

Saimon's brother Abdullah Hossain, along with nine other individuals who were allegedly forcibly disappeared for periods ranging from three to 18 months during the Awami League tenure, filed separate complaints with ICT Prosecutor Tareq Abdullah against five former officials of Rab-1 and Rab-7, including Additional SP Alep Uddin.

Alep is the only officer currently in custody.

The allegations were disclosed yesterday by Abdul Kaiyum, secretary of the Voice of Enforced Disappearance Persons (VOED), during a press briefing on the premises of the International Crimes Tribunal (ICT).

Nine victims and Saimon's brother stood beside him. Kaiyum said Saimon remains behind bars.

Contacted, prosecutor Tareq confirmed receiving the complaints on Tuesday.

work inside ghers, often suffering skin diseases and waterborne illnesses.

With aquatic diseases in shrimp farms leading to heavy losses and debts, many farmers wish to return to rice cultivation, but salinity has made their lands unfit for growing crops.

"We thought shrimp would bring prosperity, but repeated aquatic diseases wiped out our savings. I want to grow rice again, but the soil is no longer suitable for the crop," said Abidul Islam from Shyamnagar.

A RAY OF HOPE

Yet, there are signs of resilience. Farmers in some parts of the coastal belt are experimenting with salt-tolerant rice and vegetables - crop varieties that can withstand high salinity.

"We lost hope when our fields became too saline for growing paddy. With salt-tolerant rice varieties, we can now at least grow something again," said Anwar Hossain, a farmer in Kaliganj.

But many farmers still lack awareness and support.

Saiful Islam, deputy director of the DAE in Satkhira, said they are promoting crop diversification and supporting farmers with adaptive techniques.

"During the Boro season [from October to March], we advise farmers to plant early so that crops are exposed to salinity for a shorter period," he said.

When salinity levels drop after the monsoon, the department recommends planting resilient rice varieties such as BRRIdhan 67, 93, 97 and BINA dhan 10.

Farmers are also encouraged to dig small ponds beside fields to store freshwater for irrigation during the dry months. "We have been trying to boost yields along the fringes of the ghers during the Boro season," Saiful said.

Experts say climate-resilient agriculture - from introducing new varieties of salt-tolerant seeds to re-excavating freshwater canals - is essential to help the farmers in the region recover.

They believe the crisis can be partly managed through timely information, training, and widespread adoption of salt-tolerant crops.

[Our Satkhira correspondent contributed to this report.]

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Uphold integrity, patriotism

Army chief tells
new officers

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Army Chief General Waker Uz Zaman yesterday called on newly commissioned officers to uphold integrity, discipline and an unwavering commitment to the nation as they embark on their military careers.

Addressing the President's Parade at the Bangladesh Military Academy in Bhatiyar, he greeted those attending the ceremony marking the commissioning of officer cadets of the 89th BMA Long Course and the 60th BMA Special Course.

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Police dispersing a crowd outside Evercare Hospital in the capital's Bashundhara Residential Area yesterday afternoon. People continue to gather in front of the hospital to inquire about the health condition of BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia. The former prime minister has been hospitalised since November 23.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

'Auto-rickshaw driver shot dead in drug feud'

Suspect police; family denies
dispute, files case; 2 held

SHAHEEN MOLLAH

The 26-year-old CNG-run autorickshaw driver who was shot dead in the capital's Jurain area on Monday night was targeted by top drug dealers over previous enmity, police said.

The family, however, said the deceased, Pappu Sheikh, had no dispute with anyone.

Meanwhile, Rab 10 has arrested two FIR listed accused: Yousof Sarder, 45, and Uzzal alias Kanchi, 30. A team arrested the two from Alambagh in Jurain around 11:15am yesterday, according to a press release.

Pappu's father, Montu Sheikh, filed a murder case with Kadamtali Police Station accusing four, including Uzzal and Yousof, who are listed as narcotics traders, said Md Ayub, officer-in-charge of the station.

Uzzal was accused in three narcotics cases, while Yousof was accused in two.

The OC said the initial investigation indicates there may have been prior disputes over drug-related matters. Over this, absconding accused Bapparaj and others shot Pappu dead as he went to the spot with Bapparaj's rival group.

SEE PAGE 9 COL 2

NOVEMBER 25 BLAZE

A week on, Korail still struggling to recover

SHAHEEN MOLLAH and TOUSIF KAIUM

In a narrow lane of the Korail slum, Shafiqul Islam and Fatema Begum begin preparing tea before dawn.

Their small stall in the Boubazar area runs until midnight, but it now brings in only Tk 500 to Tk 700 a day, about half of what they earned before last week's devastating fire.

The November 25 blaze destroyed or partially damaged around 1,500 shanties in Korail, leaving hundreds homeless and turning long-established households into ashes, including Shafiqul and Fatema's.

Shafiqul, a father of four, said he once ran a small shop selling tea, cigarettes and groceries.

"It covered our expenses and sometimes left a little extra." Over seven years, he had invested around Tk 2.5 lakh in the business.

"But the fire destroyed everything. For our six-member family, I had to borrow money from my sister to restart the stall," he said.

Yesterday afternoon, the couple was

seen serving tea on two small tables, using brand new kettles, cups and spoons. Their stall now stocks only a few items: cigarettes, bread and biscuits.

Fatema said she borrowed Tk 38,000 from her maternal aunt to buy all the utensils and supplies again.



PHOTO: STAR

Shafiqul Islam at his tea stall inside the Korail slum. After losing everything in last week's fire, he had to borrow money to restart his little shop.

Earlier, the stall earned Tk 6,000 to Tk 8,000 a day because it was fully stocked, with profits of Tk 1,000 to Tk 1,200 that kept the family going.

SEE PAGE 9 COL 1

Bangladesh can 'reset the narrative' with credible polls

Says EU envoy

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh has a chance to reset the narrative with credible and professionally run elections, European Union Ambassador in Dhaka Michael Miller said yesterday.

This is a time when the country can reset its reputation with its international partners and demonstrate that it can hold these elections in a very correct and professional manner, he told reporters after a four-member EU delegation met Chief Election Commissioner AMM Nasir Uddin at Nirbachan Bhaban in Agargaon in the morning.

Miller said the EU is preparing to deploy a very large election observer

SEE PAGE 9 COL 2

Need stronger political will for disability inclusion

Ekushey Padak-winning
disability rights activist
Saidul Huq tells Star

NILIMA JAHAN

As the country is set to observe the International Day of Persons with Disabilities today, Ekushey Padak-winning activist Md Saidul Huq has urged stronger political commitment to ensure the full participation of persons with disabilities.

Huq, founder and executive director of the Blind Education and Rehabilitation Development Organisation, told The Daily Star that disability issues continue to be overlooked in policies, party manifestos and organisational structures, even with the national election approaching.

He said persons with disabilities remain under-represented in electoral processes, leadership roles and policymaking.

Their political empowerment, he stressed, is a rights-based responsibility of the state, not charity.

"The government must proactively integrate disability inclusion into policies, manifestos and organisational structures," said Huq, who himself is visually impaired.

He, however, emphasised that systemic gaps in laws and policies still prevent persons with disabilities from exercising their rights fully.

Women with disabilities face higher risks of sexual, psychological and physical violence. Adequate protective measures and legal support systems are urgently needed. The state must ensure safe shelters and accessible justice mechanisms.



He highlighted Bangladesh's slow progress in implementing disability rights laws and the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD). Although Bangladesh ratified the CRPD in 2007 and replaced the 2001 disability law with the Disability Rights and Protection Act 2013, implementation remains weak due to inadequate political will.

"There is not enough funding for essential services, such as specialised schools, healthcare centres and accessible infrastructure," Huq said.

Awareness among persons with disabilities about the law is also limited, he added.

He pointed to tangible consequences of policy gaps, such as last year's quota reforms, which reduced job opportunities for persons with disabilities in both public and private sectors.

"After the July uprising, the changes that followed reduced our prospects. Only a 1 percent quota now exists for government jobs, which is insufficient."

He called for raising quotas to 2 percent for grades 9-13 and 5 percent for grades 14-20, divided by disability type to ensure effectiveness.

"Quotas must be strictly enforced, recruitment processes monitored, and hiring agencies held accountable. Only then can inclusion in public and private-sector employment move beyond paper commitments."

SEE PAGE 9 COL 6

Fair polls alone cannot guarantee democracy

Says Badiul Alam Majumdar

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh has held several fair elections in the past, but these did not lead to a democratic transition, said Badiul Alam Majumdar, secretary of Shushashoner Jonno Nagorik, yesterday.

He said elections are essential but not sufficient on their own, as true democratic transition requires legal, institutional and structural reforms.

He made the remarks at a roundtable titled "Fair Elections and Democratic Transition: Citizens' Reflections," organised by Shujan at the Cirdap auditorium in Dhaka.

Badiul Alam, who also heads the electoral reform commission, said elections are only the first step in the democratic process. Although some previous elections may be considered fair and neutral, they did not result in a democratic transition, he added.

He said a democratic transition means establishing a sustainable democratic system where every election is fair, good governance is ensured and citizens'

democratic and civil rights are protected. Despite a few fair elections, such a system has not taken shape.

To achieve a democratic transition after a fair election, he said issues such as creating a clean political environment must be addressed.

Explaining the decline in political integrity, he said the electoral system has become criminalised over time, allowing wrongdoers to enter parliament and undermine the political sphere.

He added that major corruption in the country is carried out under political protection. Large-scale corruption, he said, stems from collusion among politicians, some bureaucrats and businesspeople.

He called for legal, institutional and structural reforms to change these conditions.

Political scientist Prof Dilara Chowdhury, photographer Shahidul Alam and Electoral Reform Commission member Jesmin Tuli also spoke at the event.

The discussion was chaired by Shujan Vice President MA Matin.



Women entrepreneurs from Chawk Bazar, Narayanganj and Munshiganj rent a boat for the day to make door to door sales by visiting several residential areas in Dhaka. These small business owners purchase daily household items made of plastic and steel from their respective areas and sell them to earn around Tk 500 to Tk 600 a day. The photo was taken yesterday in the Mitford area of Old Dhaka, on the north bank of the Buriganga river.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

NETRAKONA SADAR Bridge without approach roads unused for 2yrs

JAYDUL ISLAM, Netrakona

A 40-metre girder bridge built over Nariyapara canal in Netrakona Sadar has remained unused for two years as approach roads on both ends are yet to be constructed.

The bridge was built by the Local Government Engineering Department at a cost of Tk 3.44 crore to connect the road between Kaliyara Gabragati Union Parishad and Kumarpur ferry ghat. The road is the only route for around 12,000 residents of some 12 to 14 nearby villages.

The bridge was commissioned in 2021 and its work was awarded to MS Mirza Construction and Mamun Construction with a deadline in August 2022. The



deadline was extended twice, first to December 2023 and then to June 2024.

"We waited three years for this bridge, but it has brought us no benefit," said Mojibur Rahman, a local.

LGED officials said the project did not include any allocation for land acquisition, which has halted construction of the approach roads.

Attempts to contact the owners of the contracting firms were unsuccessful.

LGED Executive Engineer Md Wahiduzzaman said, "There was no allocation for land acquisition. We have informed the higher authorities. If the landowners agree to provide the land, we can construct the approach roads and open the bridge quickly."

Six killed in road crashes in 3 districts

STAR REPORT

At least six persons were killed in road accidents in Jhenaidah, Madaripur and Narsingdi districts in the last two days.

In Jhenaidah, a constable named Anisur Rahman Anis, 45, died after a truck hit his motorcycle in Kotchandpur yesterday morning.

"The truck was seized by its driver managed to flee," said OC Kabir Hossain of Kotchandpur Model Police Station.

In Madaripur, a Khulna bound bus hit a truck around 9:30am on Arial Khan Bridge in Madaripur, killing three people and injuring eight others. The identities of the deceased could not be known immediately.

In Narsingdi, two persons were killed as a motorcycle collided with an auto-rickshaw in Shibpur on Monday night.

The deceased were bike rider Mahmudul Hasan Raj, 22, and Shafiq, 21, his pillion.



Workers move in a long line carrying sacks of fish, caught in the deep sea, from boats to cold storage along the Karnaphuli river in Chattogram. After the fishing trawlers return, the fish are offloaded onto small boats and taken to storage facilities before being sent across the country. The photo was taken at Karnaphuli ghat recently.

PHOTO: RAJIB RAIHAN

BANSHBARIA-SANDWIP ROUTE

Sunken pontoon disrupts ferry service

SIFAYET ULLAH, Ctg

Ferry service on the Banshbaria-Sandwip route has been disrupted for the past six months after one of the two pontoons at Banshbaria ghat sank in the Sandwip Channel.

The route connects Sandwip Island, an upazila of Chattogram, with the mainland, and residents are heavily dependent on waterway transport.

At present, ferries can operate only one round during high tide instead of two, relying on a single pontoon.

Ferry service on the route was launched in March this year, allowing all types of vehicles and passengers to travel directly between the mainland and the island.

Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Authority had installed two pontoons, a

low-water and a mid-water, at Banshbaria ghat. Tidal surges in May caused the low-water pontoon and its adjoining road to subside and sink.

During a recent visit, this correspondent saw goods-

low-water and a mid-water, at high tide, sometimes for as long as five to six hours," said Mohammed Sobahan, a truck driver.

"The ferry service has transformed our connectivity, allowing direct vehicular

and teacher from Sandwip.

Md Yusuf, pontoon-in-charge at Banshbaria ferry ghat, said they can now operate only one trip during high tide.

Currently, a ferry named Kapotakkho makes one round trip on the route. According to BIWTA, each trip carries around 20 to 25 vehicles of various sizes and 60 to 70 passengers.

Contacted, Selim Reza, assistant engineer of BIWTA, said physical work has begun to recover the pontoon. "Construction has also started for an additional pontoon at Banshbaria ghat. We hope to complete these works during the dry season," he said.

Adverse weather and excessive silt accumulation on the route are the biggest challenges to maintaining regular ferry operations, he added.



laden trucks waiting for high tide for the ferry to resume operations.

"Ferry cannot dock during low tide, so we have to wait for

access to the mainland. However, due to the sunken pontoon, we are unable to reap the benefits fully," said Shahidul Islam, a resident

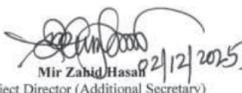
Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Office of the Project Director
Accelerating and Strengthening Skills for Economic Transformation (ASSET) Project
Directorate of Technical Education
Plot -F-4/B, Agargaon, Sher-E-Bangla Nagar, Dhaka-1207
www.asset-dte.gov.bd

Memo No: 57.03.0000.051.07.881.25-5086 Date: 02 December, 2025

Corrigendum of REQUEST FOR BIDS (Package No: CP-GD-34)

Assignment Title	Last Date of Submission (Original)	Last Date of Submission (Updated)
Supply, installation and commissioning of Full Mission Engine Room Simulator, Liquid Cargo Handling Simulator & High Voltage Simulator for Ship Building and Marine Technology of Institute of Marine Technologies	14:30 hour BST (GMT+6:00), 15 December 2025	14:30 hour BST (GMT+6:00), 15 January 2026

Further information can be obtained at the address below during office hours i.e. 09:00 to 17:00 hours (GMT+06:00).


Mir Zahid Hasan
Project Director (Additional Secretary)
ASSET Project
Telephone: 880-02-41024953
E-mail: pd@asset-dte.gov.bd

GD-2632

'An attack on freedom of expression'

Nagorik Coalition slams Shadik Kayem over case against Earki, meme pages, content creators

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Nagorik Coalition has expressed deep concern over the "misuse" of defamation and harassment cases against satire and social media platforms.

In a statement yesterday, the coalition said police had recently accepted several cases filed by Ducsu VP Abu Shadik Kayem. The complaints targeted Earki, a political satire outlet, along with meme pages, cartoonists, and individual content creators.

"These cases amount to a direct attack on freedom of expression and violate fundamental rights enshrined in the Constitution," the coalition said.

It argued that satire, cartoons, criticism, and opinion cannot be treated as crimes in a democratic society unless they incite violence. "Using the law to instill fear or suppress dissent undermines civic dignity and democratic principles," the statement added.

The coalition criticised the Ducsu VP's move as "ill-considered, intolerant and immature," saying it harmed not only the student body but also the broader reputation of Dhaka University.

বাংলাদেশ পানি উন্নয়ন বোর্ড
Office of the Executive Engineer
Naogaon WD Division
BWDB, Naogaon
Telephone No. 0258882791 (Office)
E-mail: ee.naogaon.bwdb@gmail.com

নির্বাহী প্রকৌশলীর দপ্তর
নওগাঁ পানি উন্নয়ন বিভাগ
বাপাউবে, নওগাঁ
টেলিফোন নং-০২৫৮৮৮৮২৭৯১ (অফিস)
E-mail: ee.naogaon.bwdb@gmail.com

Invitation for e-Tender
Reference: 42.01.6400.405.07.001.25-2010 Dated: 02/12/2025 (N-1; O&M)

The following e-Tenders under O&M budget of Naogaon WD Division, BWDB, Naogaon during the FY: 2025-26 have been invited in the National e-GP System Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) for the procurement of the following work under OTM method.

SI No.	e-GP ID	Package No. & description/name of works	Work location
01	1185657	Package No. Naogaon/OM/EMBK/25-26/W-2 Protective work (Precautionary) on the Left Bank of the Little Jamuna River from Km. 15.980 to Km. 16.080 = 100.00m at Krishnapur in Upazila: Ratinagar, District: Naogaon in C/W "Raktadaha-Lohachura Beel Drainage Scheme" Project under Naogaon WD Division, BWDB, Naogaon during the FY 2025-2026.	Area: Krishnapur Upazila: Ratinagar District: Naogaon

This is an online tender, where only e-Tender will be accepted in the National e-GP Portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted. To submit e-Tender, registration in the National e-GP System Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) is required. Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP System Portal and from e-GP help desk (16575, +8809677016575) (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd).

পানি-৩৪২/২০২৫-২০২৬
৪৫৩


Asif Ahmed
Executive Engineer
Naogaon WD Division
BWDB, Naogaon

GD-2633

Trust Bank PLC.
A Bank for Financial Inclusion
Head Office, Shadinata Tower, Bir Srestha Shaheed
Jahangir Gate, Dhaka Cantonment, Dhaka-1206

TENDER NOTICE

1. Sealed tender is hereby invited by Trust Bank PLC. from bonafide tenderers/suppliers/firms for following tender:
Construction and Supply of Fit-Out Items Works for Trust Bank PLC., Radisson Blu Chattogram Bay View Hotel Branch, Chattogram (Relocation).

2. Interested bidders may collect Tender schedule after depositing tender schedule fee from Trust Bank PLC., Purchase & Procurement Department, Head Office, Shadinata Tower (Level # 05), Bir Srestha Shaheed Jahangir Gate, Dhaka Cantonment, Dhaka.

Note: TBL reserves the right to accept or reject any or all the tenders, in part or full.

Purchase & Procurement Department

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Office of the Executive Engineer
Netrokona PWD Division, Netrokona.
Phone: 02-998827292, Fax: 02-996651956
ওয়েব সাইট : www.pwd.netrokona.gov.bd

Memo No: 25.36.7200.130.17.002.23.1045 Date: 01/12/2025

e-Tender Notice

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

SI No.	Tender ID	Name of the work	Tender Opening & Closing Date
1	1188240	Establishment of 560 nos Model Mosque and Islamic Cultural Center in Zila & Upazila of Bangladesh (2 nd Revised), Sub-Head: Supply of bedding to the Sadar Upazila Model Mosque and Islamic Cultural Center in Netrokona District. (FY-2025-2026)	15/12/2025
2.	1183210	Establishment of 560 nos Model Mosque and Islamic Cultural Center in Zila & Upazila of Bangladesh (2 nd Revised), Sub-Head: Supply of bedding to the Apara Upazila Model Mosque and Islamic Cultural Center in Netrokona District. (FY-2025-2026)	15/12/2025

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. The fees for downloading the e-Tender Documents from the National e-GP System Portal have to be deposited online through any registered banks branches according to tender notice. Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP System Portal and from e-GP help desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd).


Md. Farjan Anwar
Executive Engineer
Netrokona PWD Division
Netrokona.
E-mail: ee_netro@pwd.gov.bd

GD-2620

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Local Government Engineering Department
Office of the Upazila Engineer
Patiya, Chattogram
www.lged.gov.bd

Memo No. 46.02.1561.000.99.002.2025-945 Dated: 02/12/2025

e-Tender Notice-04/2025-2026 (OTM)

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-Tender, registration in the National e-GP System Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) is required. The fees for downloading the e-Tender documents of following Packages from the National e-GP System Portal have to be deposited online through any registered banks.

SI No.	Tender ID	Last selling date & time	Closing and opening date & time
1	1188761	21/12/2025 17.00pm	22/12/2025 14.00pm

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


Kamal Kanti Paul
Upazila Engineer
Local Government Engineering Department
Upazila: Patiya; District: Chattogram
E-mail: ue.patiya@lged.gov.bd

GD-2622

2 found dead in Ctg

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Chattogram

Two persons were found dead in separate incidents in Fatikchhari and Boalkhali upazilas of Chattogram yesterday.

In Fatikchhari, Md Sohel Mia, 17, an auto-rickshaw driver, was found dead in the morning with his hands and throat tied to a tree in Madina Tila area under ward-3 of Nazirhat Municipality. Sohel hailed from Lalmonirhat.

On information, police went to the spot and recovered the body, said Joutish Chandra Deb, in-charge of Udalía Police Beat. "Legal steps are underway in this connection," he added.

In Boalkhali, Farhad Hossain Raju, 30, a microbus driver, was found dead in his residence in Sreepur Kharandwip union.

Lutfur Rahman, officer-in-charge of Boalkhali Police Station, said Raju's family members found him hanging from the ceiling of his room around midnight, and informed police. Police later recovered the body in the morning and sent it to Chattogram Medical College morgue for autopsy, the OC said.

An unnatural death case has been filed in this connection.

CJ forms 9-member team to create posts for SC Secretariat

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Chief Justice Syed Refaat Ahmed has formed a nine-member committee to create posts for the newly-established Supreme Court Secretariat and make it functional.

The committee, led by Justice Md Ashfaqul Islam, the senior most judge of the Appellate Division, is set to hold its first meeting on December 7. Mohammad Habibur Rahman Siddiquee, registrar general of the SC and acting senior secretary of the SC secretariat, told The Daily Star.

He said the SC secretariat, from now on, will deal with the posting, promotion, and transfer of lower court judges -- which were earlier carried out by the law ministry.

On December 1, a notification was issued, mentioning that a high-level committee has been formed to oversee the creation, abolition, and reorganisation of posts across the SC registry, SC secretariat, administrative tribunals, and subordinate judiciary.

The committee has been constituted under Article 17 of the Supreme Court Secretariat Ordinance, 2025.

Dengue claims two more lives

UNB, Dhaka

Two more deaths were reported from dengue in 24 hours till yesterday morning, raising the number of fatalities from the mosquito-borne disease to 386 this year.

During the period, 565 more patients were hospitalised with the viral fever, raising the total infected case to 95,577 this year, according to the DGHS. Last year, dengue claimed the lives of 575 people.

In 2023, 1,705 people lost their lives due to dengue, making it the deadliest year on record.

Venezuela does not want 'a slave's peace'

Says Maduro amid US military threat; US admiral ordered 2nd strike on alleged drug boat

AFP, Washington

US President Donald Trump summoned his top national security officials to the Oval Office on Monday to discuss Venezuela, as his counterpart Nicolas Maduro rejected a "slave's peace" amid mounting fears of American military action.

The meeting comes as Trump ramps up pressure with a major naval build-up in the Caribbean, bombings of suspected drug-ferrying boats, and ominous warnings to avoid Venezuelan airspace.

"I will confirm that the president will be meeting with his national security team on this subject and on many matters," White House Press Secretary Karoline Leavitt said.

Leavitt would not say whether Trump would reach a final decision after months of tensions with Caracas, saying she was "definitely not going to detail the specifics of the meeting."



But she declined to rule out the possibility of US troops on the ground on Venezuela. "There's options at the president's disposal that are on the table, and I'll let him speak on those," Leavitt said.

Maduro, who accuses Washington of seeking to topple him, told thousands of supporters at a rally in Caracas that Venezuela does not want a "slave's peace."

"We want peace, but peace with sovereignty, equality, freedom!" said Maduro, who danced on stage with flag-waving supporters during the event. "We do not want a slave's peace, nor the peace of colonies."

Meanwhile, a US admiral acting under the authority of Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth ordered a second strike that targeted survivors of an initial attack on an alleged drug smuggling boat, the White House said Monday.

The legality of the Trump administration's deadly strikes against suspected drug traffickers in the Caribbean and Pacific has been questioned, and reports of the follow-up attack on survivors triggered further accusations of a possible war crime.



New York City mayor-elect Zohran Mamdani and US Senator Bernie Sanders pose with Starbucks workers picketing outside a Brooklyn store on Monday, during an open-ended strike for higher wages and better labour practices.

PHOTO: REUTERS

India blocking aid to cyclone-hit Sri Lanka

Says Pakistan as relief aircraft faces clearance delay for over 60 hours

DAWN ONLINE

Pakistan's Foreign Office (FO) said yesterday that India was preventing humanitarian assistance from being sent to Sri Lanka, where severe flooding and landslides triggered by Cyclone Ditwah have claimed more than 400 lives.

In a post on X, the FO said: "India continues to block humanitarian assistance from Pakistan to Sri Lanka. The special aircraft carrying Pakistan's humanitarian assistance to Sri Lanka continues to face delay for over 60 hours now awaiting flight clearance from India."



"The partial flight clearance issued by India last night, after 48 hours, was operationally impractical: time-bound for just a few hours and without validity for the return flight, severely hindering this urgent relief mission for the brotherly people of Sri Lanka," it said.

The development comes a day after diplomatic sources said Pakistan had received permission from India to use its airspace for humanitarian aid flights to Sri Lanka to provide flood relief. Sri Lanka president has declared a state of emergency to deal with the catastrophic floods.

'End the war', not just 'pause' in fighting
Says Zelensky as US envoys hold talks with Putin

AFP, Dublin

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky yesterday urged a complete end to his country's war with Russia and not just a "pause" in the fighting.

"Our common task is to end the war, not just to achieve a pause in hostilities," he said.

Donald Trump's son-in-law Jared Kushner and envoy Steve Witkoff were due to meet with Russian leader Vladimir Putin in Moscow yesterday for high-stakes talks on ending the war in Ukraine.

5 Chinese citizens killed in attacks from Afghanistan

Says Tajikistan

REUTERS, Kabul

Afghanistan's Taliban administration said it assured neighbouring Tajikistan yesterday it was ready to tighten border security and conduct joint investigations, after attacks which Dushanbe said were launched from Afghan territory killed five Chinese nationals over the past week.

In a call with his Tajik counterpart, Afghan Foreign Minister Amir Khan Muttaqi expressed regret and said Kabul was prepared to boost coordination between border forces, adding that "joint measures against malicious elements are a pressing necessity."

"The Islamic Emirate is fully prepared to strengthen border security, conduct joint investigations, and engage in any form of coordination," Muttaqi said, according to a statement from the Afghan foreign ministry.

He added that "an atmosphere of trust" had recently developed between the two countries and should not be undermined.

DISPUTED ISLANDS Chinese, Japanese vessels engage in fresh standoff

AFP, Tokyo

Japanese and Chinese vessels engaged in a fresh standoff around disputed islands yesterday, the two countries' coast guards said.

Relations have been strained since Japan's new Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi suggested last month that her country could intervene militarily in any Chinese attack on Taiwan.

Japan's coast guard said two Chinese coast guard ships entered Japan's territorial waters around the Senkaku Islands in the East China Sea in the early hours of yesterday, and left a few hours later.

The Japanese-administered Senkaku Islands, known as the Diaoyu in China, have been a regular flashpoint between the two nations over the decades.



Mourners react beside the body of freelance Palestinian journalist Mahmoud Wadi, killed in an Israeli strike according to local health authorities, at Nasser Hospital in Khan Younis in the southern Gaza Strip yesterday.

PHOTO: REUTERS

গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার
বাংলাদেশ এনার্জি রেগুলেটরী কমিশন
আইইবি ভবন (৬ষ্ঠ ও ৭ম তলা), রমনা, ঢাকা-১০০০
ওয়েবসাইট: www.berc.org.bd

নং-২৮.০১.০০০০.০১২.১৭.০০২.৬৫.৬১৫৩

তারিখ: ১৭ অগ্রহায়ণ ১৪৩২ বঙ্গাব্দ
০২ ডিসেম্বর ২০২৫ খ্রিষ্টাব্দ

Saudi CP অনুযায়ী ভোক্তাপর্যায় বেসরকারি এলপিগি ও অটোগ্যাসের মূল্য সমন্বয় বিজ্ঞপ্তি।

ডিসেম্বর ২০২৫ মাসের জন্য সৌদি আরামকো কর্তৃক প্রাপ্ত এবং বিউটেন এর ঘোষিত Saudi CP প্রতি মেট্রিক টন যথাক্রমে ৪৯৫ মার্কিন ডলার এবং ৪৮৫ মার্কিন ডলার এবং প্রোপেন ও বিউটেনের অনুপাত ৩৫:৬৫ অনুযায়ী প্রোপেন ও বিউটেনের গড় Saudi CP প্রতি মেট্রিক টন ৪৮৮.৫০ মার্কিন ডলার বিবেচনায় ডিসেম্বর ২০২৫ মাসের জন্য বেসরকারি এলপিগি ও অটোগ্যাসের ভোক্তাপর্যায়ের মূল্য নিম্নবর্ণিতভাবে সমন্বয় করা হলো:

(ক) বেসরকারি এলপিগি'র রিটেইলার পয়েন্টে ভোক্তাপর্যায় মূল্য প্রতি কেজি ১০৪.৪১ টাকায় এবং বিভিন্ন পরিমাণের বোতলজাতকৃত বেসরকারি এলপিগি'র ভোক্তাপর্যায় মূল্য নিম্নরূপভাবে সমন্বয় করা হলো:

বিভিন্ন পরিমাণের বোতলজাতকৃত বেসরকারি এলপিগি'র ভোক্তাপর্যায় সমন্বয়কৃত মূল্য, ডিসেম্বর-২০২৫

বিবরণ	বোতলজাতকৃত এলপিগি'র পরিমাণ ও মূল্য											
	৫.৫ কেজি	১২ কেজি	১২.৫ কেজি	১৫ কেজি	১৬ কেজি	১৮ কেজি	২০ কেজি	২২ কেজি	২৫ কেজি	৩০ কেজি	৩৩ কেজি	৩৫ কেজি
রিটেইলার পয়েন্টে ভোক্তাপর্যায় বিক্রয়মূল্য (মূল্যসহ)	৫৭৫ টাকা	১,২৫০ টাকা	১,০৫৫ টাকা	১,৫৬৬ টাকা	১,৬৭১ টাকা	১,৮৮০ টাকা	২,০৮৮ টাকা	২,২৯৮ টাকা	২,৬১০ টাকা	৩,১০০ টাকা	৩,৪৪৬ টাকা	৩,৬৪৪ টাকা

(খ) রেটিকুলেটেড পদ্ধতিতে (i) তরল অবস্থায় সরবরাহকৃত বেসরকারি এলপিগি'র ভোক্তাপর্যায় মূল্য প্রতি কেজি ১০০.৬৬ টাকায় এবং (ii) গ্যাসীয় অবস্থায় সরবরাহকৃত বেসরকারি এলপিগি'র ভোক্তাপর্যায় মূল্য প্রতি লিটার ০.২২৩৮ টাকায় বা প্রতি ঘনমিটার ২২৩.৮০ টাকায় সমন্বয় করা হলো।

(গ) ভোক্তাপর্যায় অটোগ্যাসের মূল্য প্রতি লিটার ৫৭.৩২ টাকায় সমন্বয় করা হলো।

- সমন্বয়কৃত উক্ত মূল্য ১৭ অগ্রহায়ণ ১৪৩২ বঙ্গাব্দ/ ০২ ডিসেম্বর ২০২৫ খ্রিষ্টাব্দ তারিখ সন্ধ্যা ০৬:০০ ঘটিকা হতে প্রযোজ্য ও কার্যকর হবে এবং পরবর্তী আদেশ না দেয়া পর্যন্ত তা বলবৎ থাকবে।
- ৪ মে ২০২৫ তারিখে জারীকৃত বিইআরসি আদেশ নম্বর: ২০২৫/০৭ অনুযায়ী সরকারি এলপিগি'র ডিলার/রিটেইলার পয়েন্টে ভোক্তাপর্যায় মূল্যহারা প্রতি ১২.৫০ কেজি ৮২৫ টাকা অপরিবর্তিত থাকবে।
- প্রত্যেক এলপিগি মজুতকরণ ও বোতলজাতকরণ লাইসেন্সী এলপিগি মজুতকরণ ও বোতলজাতকরণ পরবর্তী মূল্যে (মূল্য-উত্তর/মূল্যসহ) ডিস্ট্রিবিউটরের নিকট এলপিগি বিক্রয় করবে এবং সে অনুযায়ী মূল্য চালান/ডেলিভারি অর্ডার (ডিও) প্রদান করবে।
- কোনো পর্যায়ে এলপিগি মজুতকরণ ও বোতলজাতকরণ, ডিস্ট্রিবিউটর এবং ভোক্তাপর্যায় রিটেইলার পয়েন্টে কমিশন কর্তৃক নির্ধারিত মূল্যের চেয়ে অধিক মূল্যে এলপিগি (বোতলজাতকৃত এবং রেটিকুলেটেড সিঙ্গেলের মাধ্যমে সরবরাহকৃত)/অটোগ্যাস বিক্রয় করা যাবে না।
- ২৫ আশ্বিন ১৪৪৮ বঙ্গাব্দ/ ১০ অক্টোবর ২০২১ খ্রিষ্টাব্দ তারিখে জারীকৃত বিইআরসি আদেশ নম্বর: ২০২১/০৭ এর অন্যান্য আদেশ ও নির্দেশনা অপরিবর্তিত থাকবে।
- বিত্তারিত মূল্য সমন্বয় আদেশ (বিইআরসি আদেশ নম্বর: ২০২৫/১১) কমিশনের ওয়েবসাইট www.berc.org.bd এ পাওয়া যাবে।

কমিশনের আদেশক্রমে,
মোঃ নজরুল ইসলাম সরকার
সচিব, বিইআরসি।
ফোন: ০২-২২৬৪৪০৯০৫

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Office of the Executive Engineer, RHD
Bandarban Road Division, Bandarban.
Email: eeban@rhd.gov.bd

Memo.No-35.01.0300.401.16.004.25- 1037

Dated:02-12-2025

e-Tender Notice

This is to notify that the below mentioned e-Tenders are invited in the National e-Gp system portal (<http://www.e-procure.gov.bd>) for Procurement of works under Road Division Bandarban. Interested persons/firms can see details of the Tenders to visit the website www.eprocure.gov.bd

Sl. No	Tender No & Tender ID	Name of work	Tender Document Last selling Date & Time Closing and opening Date & Time
01	1178893 OTM/PMP/Road-01/e-GP/EE/RHD/Ban/2025-2026	Surfacing by DBS Wearing Course, Protective work & Construction of Saucer Drain at 1st KM to 20th KM (Ch.00+000KM to Ch.20+000KM) at Chiringya (Fasiakhali)-Lama-Alikadam Road (Z 1005) under Bandarban Road Division during the year 2025-2026.	23-Dec-2025 16:00:00 PM 24-Dec-2025 12:30:00 PM

(MD.Sakhawat Hossain)
ID No-602286
Executive Engineer (C:C), RHD
Road Division, Bandarban.

The Daily Star

FOUNDER EDITOR: LATE S. M. ALI

A promising pledge, but execution is key

Political backing of child rights manifesto raises hope

The endorsement of a child rights manifesto by a dozen political parties now preparing for the ultimate contest for popular mandate is a welcome development at a time when child-focused indicators reveal a worsening situation. We commend the leadership of these parties for backing the manifesto that contains 10 commitments, pledging to embed them in their policies and election agendas and acting on them if elected.

It was an encouraging moment to witness rival political forces—often accused of endless bickering over governance, heritage, and the nation's future direction—come together for a shared cause. This convergence of commitments to safeguard children's futures by the BNP, Jamaat-e-Islami, National Citizen Party, Jatiya Party, Amar Bangladesh Party, Bangladesher Samajtantrik Dal, Communist Party of Bangladesh, Gano Forum, Ganosamhati Andolon, Gono Odhikar Parishad, Khelafat Majlis, and Nagorik Oikya rightly deserves appreciation. UNICEF's role in convening these parties is equally laudable.

We hope these parties genuinely recognise the gravity of the challenges children face in relation to nutrition and health, quality education and skills development, an enabling environment for creativity, protection from physical and mental abuse, violence and exploitation, the persistence of child labour, and the growing threats posed by climate change.

According to the Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey 2025, conducted by the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics and UNICEF, one in eight children under five is "wasted," a life-threatening form of malnutrition. The rate has risen to 12.9 percent in 2025 from 9.8 percent in 2019, while nearly 700,000 babies are born with low birth weight. Child labour has increased from 6.8 percent to 9.2 percent, and 3-4 million school-age children remain out of school. The survey also shows that nearly half of all girls marry before turning 18. In terms of climate and environmental risks, 20 million children are directly exposed to climate hazards, 87 percent of drinking water is contaminated with E. coli, and 15.8 percent contains unsafe levels of arsenic.

These alarming indicators underscore the urgent need to prioritise development and strengthen governance. The child-focused manifesto, formulated by children and young people themselves, calls for allocating five percent of GDP to education and primary healthcare—in line with global recommendations—compared with the current allocations of two percent for education and one percent for health. As the manifesto rightly notes, every dollar (or taka) spent on child protection yields a ninefold social and economic return. We, therefore, hope politicians across the aisle will support aligning national budgets with these priorities. Since the commitments have been described as "non-negotiable," we remind the signatories that any deviation from their pledged actions will not only erode the trust and respect of young people, but also inflict lasting harm on the nation's future.

A warning for our health system

Chronic diseases, high costs, antibiotic resistance threaten public health

The latest Health and Morbidity Status Survey 2025 gives a stark warning about the nation's health. According to the survey, hypertension now affects 78 out of every 1,000 people, making it the most prevalent disease in the country. Not far behind are peptic ulcers (64 per 1,000) and diabetes (43 per 1,000). These chronic conditions require consistent monitoring, reliable diagnostics, and long-term treatment. Their rising prevalence points to a population increasingly burdened by non-communicable diseases at a scale our current health system is not prepared to manage.

The survey covered 1.9 lakh people from 47,040 households between November and December last year, and found that one-third of respondents experienced some form of illness in the 90 days preceding the study. Another troubling finding is that 51.2 percent of respondents relied on self-treatment or local pharmacies, while around 20 percent sought private healthcare, and only 11 percent went to government facilities. Such high dependence on informal care reflects a severe lack of accessibility to public healthcare. It also fuels antimicrobial resistance (AMR) as antibiotics—often dispensed without proper diagnosis—are frequently misused. Experts warn that AMR is no longer a distant threat; it is a growing reality, making common infections harder and more expensive to treat.

Another finding deserving the government's attention is the higher illness rates among women, both young and elderly, compared to men. Moreover, the persistent burden of out-of-pocket expenditure on the population, which averaged Tk 2,487 in the three months preceding the survey, is another serious concern. Such high healthcare costs are crippling for low- and middle-income families. The alarming trends underscore the urgency of health sector reforms.

The Health Sector Reform Commission had already made crucial recommendations with urgency to address the challenges exposed by the survey. It is, however, concerning that out of its 33 key reform proposals, the government has halted implementations of 15 following the Cabinet Division review. Notably, the excluded recommendations include VAT and tax exemptions on essential antibiotics and medicines for cancer, diabetes, and hypertension, along with proposals for a permanent health commission and a separate public service commission for doctor recruitment. Pushing back these reforms at a time when our health sector is already facing major challenges such as inadequate funding, a shortage of health workers, unequal access to services, and weak governance is most unfortunate.

We urge the government not to downplay the issues plaguing our health sector and to urgently implement the reforms to make healthcare delivery pro-people.

THIS DAY IN HISTORY

Gas leak in Bhopal, India

On this day in 1984, a gas leak from a Union Carbide plant in Bhopal, India, resulted in 15,000 to 20,000 deaths and leaving some half million survivors with chronic ailments.

How NEIR exposes our lazy journalism



Kamal Ahmed is consulting editor at The Daily Star. He led the Media Reform Commission under the interim government. His X handle is @ahmedkka.

KAMAL AHMED

It is disheartening to see that, as journalists, we are losing both our inquisitiveness and our capacity for critical thinking. Instead, our work is increasingly tilting towards relaying and amplifying pre-processed information—much like the growing fascination with processed foods. Laziness may be partly responsible for this habit. Cooking requires thought, preparation, and labour; processed food, by contrast, sits on shelves or in freezers waiting to be consumed with minimal effort. Lazy journalism is just as convenient: communication experts package information that advances their employers' political or commercial interests and deliver it to journalists—often to familiar faces—through digital communication or courtesy visits.

Professional training and ethics require journalists to examine such processed content critically, rigorously analyse it, ask pertinent questions, verify both current and historical facts, and then reprocess the information for publication or broadcast. In doing so, misinformation, untruths, and unsubstantiated claims should be filtered out, and necessary context added. Unfortunately, the current trend in the media industry appears to abandon these basic principles of a profession fundamentally rooted in public service.

The reporting on the government's new mandatory registration of mobile handsets and the protests by sellers illustrate our waning curiosity and failure to ask critical, public-interest questions.

Bangladesh's telecom regulator, BTRC, is set to launch the National Equipment Identity Register (NEIR) on December 16, under which every mobile phone must have its International Mobile Equipment



VISUAL: MONOROM POLOK

Identity (IMEI) registered. One would naturally ask why the authorities are making this registration mandatory 32 years after mobile phones first appeared in the country.

According to reports, BTRC Commissioner Mahmud Hossain told a Dhaka seminar that the registration drive is intended "to restore market discipline and enhance security." Citing a flood of cloned handsets, BTRC's director general, Brig Gen Md Aminul Hoque, claimed that around 50 lakh devices are active under only five valid IMEI numbers. How 50 lakh fake mobiles can enter a market evading customs and other law-enforcing agencies is quite mind-boggling.

The idea of mandatory IMEI registration was originally floated during the previous autocratic regime of Sheikh Hasina in 2020. The justification was the same even then: curbing cloned, or fake devices, allegedly used in crimes. Authorities

also claimed that unscrupulous traders smuggle refurbished or low-quality phones, and even top-tier brands, by evading taxes. But facing some resistance, that initiative was then frozen.

It is evident that NEIR is being imposed on consumers for two reasons: (i) to mask the failures of agencies responsible for combating

Officials claim that NEIR is a global practice. A simple check of open source information would show otherwise. In most of Europe, NEIR is not mandatory, just as SIM registration is not required. One can buy a phone at duty-free upon arrival at Heathrow or Vienna airport, and upon exiting immigration, can pick up a SIM with a data or voice package from any convenience store—no questions asked, no ID required. If the government insists on enforcing NEIR, existing mobile subscribers will again face identity verification, similar to when purchasing SIM cards.

We all know the government's poor record in safeguarding citizens' personal data. In 2015, BTRC compelled biometric SIM registration, claiming it would prevent SIM cloning and related crimes. Not only did the scheme fail, but it also exposed users' personal information through repeated data breaches. Misuse of subscriber data became so rampant that BTRC had to issue a directive to mobile operators to ensure data protection. Breaches were not limited to telecom operators; the NID database was also compromised.

It can also be argued that the NEIR is an expansion of the government's surveillance capabilities—a power that has long been a cause of concern for its abuse, violating fundamental privacy rights, particularly against dissenting voices. Investigations into abusive and criminal behaviours by members of security agencies during the previous regime have shown that surveilling mobile phones was a common practice to crack down on opposition activists.

Now, as the government attempts to impose yet another unnecessary scheme to conceal the incompetence of enforcement agencies—BTRC, police, customs—citizens are once again expected to bear the burden. Is this not déjà vu?

A final curiosity: why would a group of journalists, under the banner of the Telecom and Technology Reporters' Network Bangladesh (TRNB), organise a seminar on NEIR without questioning its risks or relevance? Why provide a platform for BTRC officials and industry representatives to promote NEIR rather than subject their claims to scrutiny?

phone cloning and device-related crimes, and (ii) to curb tax evasion and boost government revenue.

Both arise from governance failures, yet consumers are the ones expected to endure the inconvenience of registering their phones.

Registering a phone's IMEI—a unique 15 digit identifier—against a National Identity (NID) Card is nearly impossible for many low-income earners and for people with limited numeracy. They will need assistance, which will cost money.

Undoubtedly, tech-literate users do understand the value of knowing their phone's IMEI, especially for reporting losses. But police rarely recover stolen phones. In my own experience, they do not even follow up with investigation updates. This is not unique to Bangladesh; globally, recovering stolen phones is uncommon because the cost of policing often outweighs the value of the device—unless the victim is a prominent figure.

INTERNATIONAL DAY OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

Bangladesh must enforce the disability rights



Mir Preom Mosharraf is an independent legal analyst, holding an LLB from the University of London and an LLM from North South University. The author is living with ankylosing spondylitis.

MIR PREOM MOSHARROF

The paradox of disability in Bangladesh is stark: we are a country that legislates compassion on paper but constructs hostility in concrete. Bangladesh's disabled population stands at over 36 lakh. They are, at least nominally, protected under the constitution, the Rights and Protection of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2013, and the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), which the country ratified in 2007. Yet, the lived reality for these citizens is one of structural abandonment. Accessibility is rare, dignity is conditional, and rights exist largely as bureaucratic artefacts. As we approach the International Day of Persons with Disabilities, we must confront an uncomfortable truth: the state has mastered the art of acknowledging disabled people while simultaneously excluding them.

The constitutional framework is unequivocal. Article 15(d) obliges the state to provide social protection; Article 19 ensures equality of opportunity; and Article 27 guarantees equality before the law. Parliament responded with the Rights and Protection of Persons with Disabilities Act, which, in theory, promises accessibility, education, and employment. However, the subsequent Rights and Protection of Persons with Disabilities Rules, 2015, exposed the system's fatal weaknesses—the very instrument meant to operationalise this act—by prioritising form over function, focusing on committee compositions

and certification timelines while remaining silent on technical accessibility standards. They prescribe 30-day windows for issuing certificates but fail to mandate ramp gradients, tactile paving specifications, or minimum door widths.

This regulatory hollowness is etched into Dhaka's urban landscape. The majority of public buildings, courts, and hospitals remain inaccessible. Sidewalks are not just difficult; they are death traps for wheelchair users and the visually impaired. Even modern triumphs like the Metro Rail become islands of exclusion when the footpaths leading to them are broken or blocked. These are not mere infrastructural oversights; they are daily violations of Section 34 of the act. Without mandatory technical standards tied to building approvals, "accessibility" remains a subjective favour rather than an enforceable right.

The administrative failure is equally stark. The national registry, resulting in the Suborno Nagorik Card (Golden Citizen Card), which is a unique identification card for persons with disabilities, has made millions visible on a ledger but invisible in life. An identification card should be a passport to services; in Bangladesh, it has become a paper talisman. Holders of the card still queue for inaccessible services and are turned away from recruitment drives. The card grants identity but not access. This stands in sharp contrast to functional systems abroad. India's Unique Disability

ID (UDID) pairs identification with municipal one-stop centres; Brazil's Benefício de Prestação Continuada (Continuous Cash Benefit) under the Organic Law of Social Assistance (LOAS) ties identity to means-tested cash benefits; and the UK's Access to Work programme links registration directly to workplace adaptations. These countries succeed because they

"reservations" mentioned in the act lack enforcement mechanisms. There is no statutory compulsion for public institutions to fill reserved posts, and no financial penalty for those who ignore them. The committees tasked with oversight are housed within the very ministries they are supposed to monitor, lacking both independence and the teeth to impose sanctions.

To shift from symbolic inclusion to operational reality, the government must move beyond vague directives. Legislative reform is required to mandate detailed technical accessibility standards, linking building occupancy certificates strictly to compliance. The Suvarna Nagorik Card must be transformed into a service-linked instrument, where issuance automatically triggers eligibility for assistive devices, transport concessions, and social safety net payments. Furthermore, the fragmented bureaucracy needs to be replaced by ward-level one-stop centres that bundle certification and benefits, sparing families the indignity of navigating a hostile administration.

Most urgently, the state must establish an independent enforcement authority with the power to audit ministries and impose penalties for non-compliance with employment quotas. The graduates on Dhaka's streets are not pleading for charity; they are demanding what the constitution and the CRPD already promise—equal opportunity. The right to be counted cannot substitute for the right to participate. As the interim government champions a comprehensive agenda of state reform, it faces a fundamental test of its sincerity: whether it will build a fair system for all citizens. Until enforceable standards, independent oversight, and remedial powers are established, Bangladesh will remain what it has always been for 36 lakh of its people: a nation built without us.

The majority of public buildings, courts, and hospitals remain inaccessible. Sidewalks are not just difficult; they are death traps for wheelchair users and the visually impaired. Even modern triumphs like the Metro Rail become islands of exclusion when the footpaths leading to them are broken or blocked. These are not mere infrastructural oversights; they are daily violations of Section 34 of the act.

treat the ID card as a trigger for funded services, not merely a statistic.

The human cost of this failure is currently visible on Dhaka's streets. In recent weeks, educated, degree-holding disabled graduates have staged sit-ins and hunger strikes. These are citizens who did everything the state asked: they obtained education, registered for their cards, and applied for jobs. Their exclusion represents a tragic waste of human capital, potentially costing the national economy millions in lost GDP and productivity. Yet, they remain shut out because the quota systems and

Caretaker by court and by charter: Are we headed for a collision?



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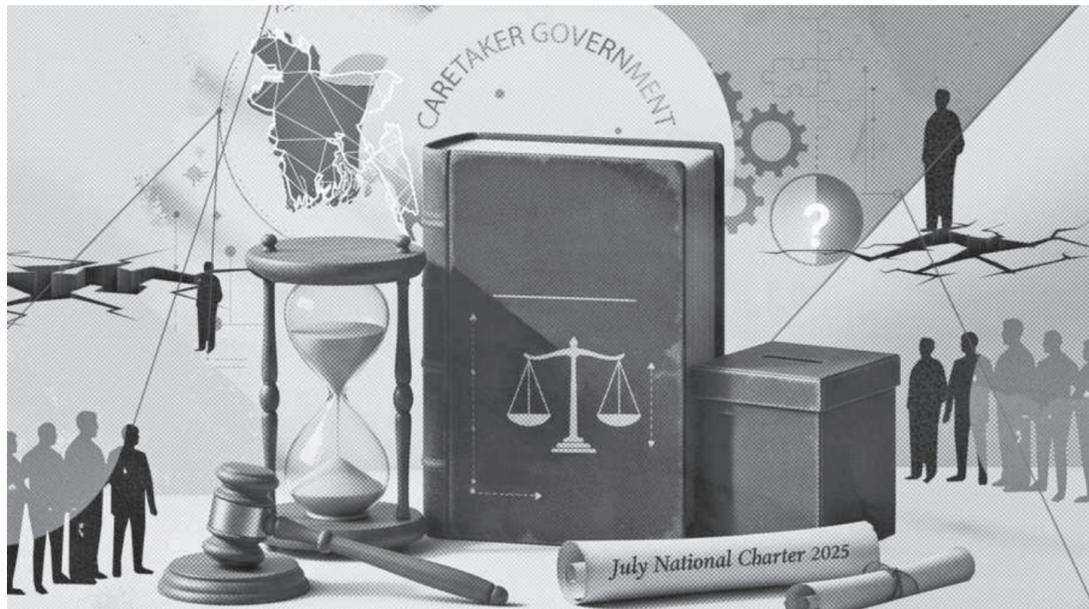
KHAN KHALID ADNAN

Bangladesh now has one idea for election-time governance running on three tracks. The High Court has ruled that the 15th Amendment's abolition of the caretaker system violated the basic structure and revived both referendums and the possibility of a neutral election-time government, in effect reopening the constitution's Chapter IIA that parliament had deleted in 2011. Its December 2024 judgment (full verdict published in July 2025) struck down the provisions that abolished the caretaker system and removed the referendum mechanism. The National Consensus Commission's July National Charter 2025 also offers a political blueprint for that system. Meanwhile, the Appellate Division, reviewing the 13th Amendment case of *Abdul Mannan Khan v Bangladesh*, has restored the 13th Amendment and branded the 2011 judgment of then Chief Justice ABM Khairul Haque as "tainted," while keeping the next election under the Professor Yunus-led interim government and reserving the caretaker for future polls.

Whether these tracks ultimately align or pull against one another is a core constitutional question.

The starting point of this tension lies in the 2011 verdict. In the original 13th Amendment case, the Appellate Division, led by Chief Justice Khairul Haque, declared the caretaker system inconsistent with democracy, yet allowed two more elections under it through prospective overruling. The then parliament treated that short order as a green light and rushed through the 15th Amendment, abolishing the caretaker provisions and referendums. That sequence enabled three contested elections in 2014, 2018, and 2024, which the High Court now openly links to the July 2024 uprising and the collapse of the Awami regime.

That said, the High Court's December 2024 judgment on the 15th Amendment did more than reopen the door to a caretaker government and restore referendums. It



VISUAL: ANWAR SOHEL

held that the abolition of the caretaker model undermined democracy, free and fair elections, judicial independence, and popular sovereignty, and treated the system as part of the constitution's basic structure. It also struck down Article 7B, amongst others, which had tried to make large parts of the constitution unamendable, and revived the referendum clause in Article 142. The student-led July uprising, the interim government formed after an Article 106 reference, and the six reform commissions under the charter—all pushed in the same direction: a neutral election-time government became politically unavoidable.

The July Charter is the clearest expression

of that political consensus, and its caretaker chapter departs sharply from the original 13th Amendment. Instead of automatically appointing the last retired chief justice as chief adviser, it creates a five-member selection committee drawn from the prime minister, opposition leadership, and the presiding officers of parliament. The committee would invite nominations from parties and independents, may search for its

while rejecting this particular caretaker architecture. Nor can they choose between the charter model and whatever institutional design the Appellate Division ultimately reads into the revived 13th Amendment when its full judgment appears. The referendum will generate a single political mandate for the charter; the court is simultaneously generating a judicial mandate for a specific reading of Chapter IIA.

this way is unlikely to avoid saying something about the composition and appointment of the future caretaker government.

This is where the discomfort becomes doctrinal. If the full judgment treats the detailed 13th Amendment model as part of the basic structure, any attempt to constitutionalise the July charter's selection committee will face a basic structure challenge. Parliament cannot use Article 142, even with a referendum, to amend what the court has held to be the basic structure. Yet the charter's drafters have tried to anchor their model in the 13th Amendment by borrowing its eligibility criteria and writing in a last-resort default to the original mechanism. Each side will claim to be the defender of the 13th Amendment's spirit rather than its saboteur.

The two projects, however, do not have to collide. Legally, there are at least two ways to avoid a clash. The Appellate Division could use the full judgment to identify only the core features of the caretaker system as basic structure—neutrality, a limited non-legislative mandate, and a 90 day time limit with a narrow extension—while leaving appointment of the chief adviser to politics. That would provide parliament and the referendum space to adopt the July charter's committee-based model. Alternatively, the caretaker provisions of the charter could first be implemented through ordinary constitutional law operating "subject to the 13th Amendment," treating the charter as a political code of practice rather than an immediate textual rewrite of Chapter IIA.

Politically, Bangladesh is now running two projects of constitutional legitimacy. One is led by judges trying to undo the damage of an earlier court and a discredited partisan decade. The other is driven by a fragile multi-party compromise embodied in the July charter and about to be tested in a binary referendum. Unless the interim government, the main parties, and the court treat both the charter and the forthcoming judgment as starting points, rather than sacred texts, the country risks moving from one era of constitutional conflict into another. After years of arguing over whether there should be a caretaker government at all, we may now be heading for a second argument over which caretaker government the constitution will actually permit.

own candidates, and must agree on a chief adviser who meets the Article 58C criteria. If that process, including a second round of shortlists, still fails, the charter falls back on the 13th Amendment mechanism but bars the president from serving as chief adviser.

This entire package is what will go to referendum on the same day as the national election under the July National Charter (Constitutional Reform) Implementation Order, 2025, and the Referendum Ordinance, 2025. The question for voters is whether they endorse the inclusion of the July charter in the constitution. It is a blunt instrument. Citizens cannot support term limits, a bicameral legislature, or stronger rights

The new Appellate Division short order already signals that it will not be content with a minimalist approach. By calling the Khairul Haque judgment "tainted" and setting it aside "in its entirety," the court has effectively endorsed the High Court's core premise that the caretaker system is compatible with, and possibly required by, the basic structure. It has also chosen to restore Chapter IIA prospectively only, keeping the coming election under the interim government and reserving the caretaker model for the 14th parliament. That sequencing shows a court that views itself as managing the transition rather than simply cleaning up an old doctrinal mistake. A court that sees its role

Bay of Bengal's slow death threatens our future



Dr. Abdullah A Dewan
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University in the US and a former physicist and nuclear
engineer of Bangladesh Atomic Energy Commission. He
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ABDULLAH A DEWAN

Bangladesh woke up this week to one of the most alarming environmental findings in its recent history. According to a report in *The Daily Star*, marine fish populations inside the country's exclusive economic zone in the Bay of Bengal have plummeted at a rate scientists describe as catastrophic. In just seven years, nearly four-fifths of the bay's fish that live in the pelagic zone—neither close to the sea-bed nor the shore—have vanished. This is not a routine decline. It is a collapse—rapid, severe, and potentially irreversible.

To grasp the magnitude of this collapse, consider that global fisheries scientists sound alarms when stocks fall by 30 to 40 percent. A 50 percent decline signals a crisis. But an 80 percent drop in less than a decade suggests a system on the edge of ecological failure. Collapses of this speed and scale have devastated fisheries in Canada's Newfoundland, the United States's California, and Peru in South America—regions where recovery took decades and, in some cases, never fully occurred. Bangladesh is now facing a similar possibility, and the consequences will be far-reaching if urgent action is not taken.

The news report attributes the collapse to several causes: overfishing, illegal fishing, and destructive fishing practices. These represent real, daily patterns of exploitation that have pushed the bay to exhaustion. Industrial trawlers—both legal and illegal—scrape the seabed with gear that destroys marine habitats, kills juvenile fish, and leaves entire zones barren. Many vessels routinely under-report their catch, operate in restricted zones, or violate

seasonal bans. Meanwhile, small-scale artisanal fishermen, who are the backbone of coastal economies, are now forced into deeper and more dangerous waters because nearshore fish have been depleted. Bangladesh's regulatory framework is simply not equipped to handle this level of pressure. The country authorises far more industrial trawlers than its marine ecology can sustain. Monitoring is inadequate. Enforcement is

As fish stocks decline, cross-border tensions over marine resources in the bay may intensify. Countries around the Bay of Bengal—India, Myanmar, Sri Lanka—are also grappling with declining fish populations. Competition for dwindling resources often leads to arrests of fishermen, maritime disputes, and escalations that strain diplomatic relations.

sporadic. Coast guard resources are overstretched. Illegal operators often escape accountability through political protection or bribery. Scientific research capacity remains thin, leaving policymakers without accurate stock assessments or long-term ecological modelling.

The collapse in fish stock will not only affect marine biodiversity; it will shake the foundations of national nutrition and coastal economies. Marine fish supply

makes up nearly 15 percent of Bangladesh's total animal protein intake. A sharp decline will raise food insecurity, increase protein deficiency, and widen nutritional inequality. For crores of coastal residents—from fishers and boatmen to traders, processors, and transport workers—marine fisheries are the primary source of income. A collapse in marine stocks means declining catch, lower earnings, rising debt, and a slide into deeper destitution. Coastal districts, already battered by cyclones, erosion, and salinity, will face additional economic hardship.

There is also a geopolitical dimension. As fish stocks decline, cross-border tensions over marine resources in the bay may intensify. Countries around the Bay of Bengal—India, Myanmar, Sri Lanka—are also grappling with declining fish populations. Competition for dwindling resources often leads to arrests of fishermen, maritime disputes, and escalations that strain diplomatic relations. Bangladesh cannot afford to let ecological collapse feed into geopolitical instability.

The nutritional consequences are equally serious. Bangladesh is already dealing with rising food inflation, reduced dietary diversity, and a growing burden of non-communicable diseases linked to a poor diet. Marine fish—comparatively affordable, accessible, and protein-rich—have long been a nutritional anchor for the poor. When fish disappear, households will be forced to shift to inferior protein sources or go without, accelerating hidden hunger, childhood stunting, and micronutrient deficiency.

This crisis reflects decades of policy neglect, political interference, weak enforcement, and an absence of a long-term vision for marine governance. Bangladesh possesses marine laws on paper, but laws do not protect oceans—institutions do. Without sustained political commitment, transparency, and science-based decision-making, no legal framework can prevent ecological collapse.

Two options are open for Bangladesh. The first is the continuation of the status quo, a path of slow death for the bay: allowing illegal trawlers to operate, letting industrial vessels destroy sea beds, ignoring scientific warnings and pretending that fish stocks will replenish themselves. If Bangladesh chooses this path, the collapse will deepen, and the bay may reach a point where recovery becomes impossible within a generation. The poor will suffer first and most, but eventually, urban consumers, national nutrition, and geopolitical stability will also be affected.

The other path is one of urgent recovery that demands political courage and institutional reform. First, Bangladesh must dramatically reduce the number of industrial trawlers. Many countries have

implemented trawler buy-back programmes to reduce pressure on marine ecosystems; Bangladesh may need to consider similar policies. Second, enforcement must be strengthened, with modern vessel-tracking systems, real-time monitoring, and a fully empowered coast guard. Third, scientifically guided seasonal bans and no-take zones must be enforced without exception. Breeding grounds and nursery habitats have to be protected if the bay is to heal.

Fourth, Bangladesh must invest in marine science. The country needs updated stock assessments, habitat mapping, and ecosystem modelling to craft policies based on evidence rather than intuition. Finally, coastal communities must be supported with alternative livelihoods—aquaculture, eco-tourism, value-added fish

processing—so that conservation does not come at the expense of human survival. In all of this, timing is crucial. The window for action is narrowing quickly.

Bangladesh has shown resilience in many areas of national life. Whether that resilience can be reactivated—decisively, intelligently, and urgently—will determine not only the future of the ocean but the future of crores of people who depend on it. The Bay of Bengal is a living asset, not an inexhaustible warehouse. Once its life collapses, no policy can bring it back quickly.

This generation has a choice to make. It can allow the bay to die slowly, its fishery wealth drained by neglect and exploitation; or it can act decisively by protecting, restoring, and managing the ocean with the seriousness the crisis demands.

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Office of the Principal
Golapganj Govt. Technical School and College
Golapganj, Sylhet
www.tscgolapganj.sylhet.gov.bd

Memo No- 57.03.9138.501.02.001.22.1567 Date: 02-12-2025

e-Tender Notice

This is notifying to all concern that the following tenders are invited in the national e-GP portal.

Sl. No.	Tender ID	Procurement Title	Online Notice Publication Date & Time	Last Selling Date & Time	Closing Date & Time
1	1188881	Procurement and Supply of Raw Materials and Spare Parts.	03-12-2025 12:00 PM	17-12-2025 05:00 PM	18-12-2025 02:30 PM
2	1188882	Procurement and Supply of Furniture.			
3	1188883	Procurement and Supply of Engineering and other Equipment.			

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 (<https://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) is must required. Further information and guidelines are available in the national e-GP portal helpdesk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd).

2-12-2025
(Sajal Kumar Pal)
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GD-2623

'ALOKER EI JHORNA-DHARAY' pays luminous tribute to Rabindranath Tagore



Bishwakabi Rabindranath Tagore is not a relic of nostalgia; he is the living pulse of Bengal. Generations have come to perceive the region's beauty, contradictions, and heritage through his poetry, songs, and stories.

PHOTOS: COURTESY

DOWEL BISWAS

Tagore's works are vessels of memory, imagination, and ethical reflection—anchoring identity and culture while inspiring continual renewal. To celebrate him is to engage directly with these roots, whether through quiet introspection or vibrant, shared performance.

The engagement unfolded with both reverence and vitality on Monday, December 1, at *Aloker Ei Jhorna-Dharay (The Eternal Illumination)*, a collaborative tribute by the Embassy of Sweden in Dhaka and HSBC Bangladesh. Held in the grand ballroom of the Sheraton Dhaka, the evening

framed Tagore not merely as "Bishwakabi" but as a philosopher of everyday life, whose works interrogate love, loss, identity, and the sacred in ordinary moments. Curated by cultural personality and theatre director Tropa Majumder, the programme eschewed the didactic, letting music, poetry, and movement speak where words alone would fall short.

Acclaimed Rabindra Sangeet exponent Adity Mohsin commanded the stage with effortless scholarship and emotive

depth. From the ethereal strains of "Anandadhara bohiche bhbone" to the nuanced cadences of "Tumi ektu kebol boshte dio", every note became a living encounter. Dahlia Ahmed's rich, resonant recitations followed, pairing clarity with spiritual weight and grace, reflecting both courage and devotion embedded in Tagore's vision.

The tribute crescendoed with Warda Rihab and her troupe performing "Aakash bhora surjo tara", "Aloker ei jhorna dharay", and other luminous numbers. Their movements and musicality a d d e d

our history and the legacy of the Poet of the World, whose vision shaped the very soul of Bengal. This evening, through the artistry of Adity Mohsin and the powerful recitations of Dahlia Ahmed and Warda Rihab, we celebrate a universality that continues to guide and uplift us—a legacy as urgent as ever."

Sweden's Ambassador to Bangladesh, Nicolas Weeks, highlighted Tagore's international resonance and the cross-cultural bridge he created: "His poetry and philosophy transcend time and borders, inspiring fresh perspectives and new ways of thinking. Celebrating Tagore is also celebrating the dynamic partnership between Sweden and Bangladesh—a shared commitment to knowledge, innovation, and culture that has flourished over five decades."

Aloker Ei Jhorna-Dharay did not place him behind glass. It let him breathe. It let his words move through the room like weather—settling on some, stirring others, unsettling a few in the best possible way. And in a country learning to balance its fractures with its hopes, the evening felt like a hand on the shoulder: steady, luminous, insistent.

In that glow, Tagore was not an icon but a pulse—steady, familiar, impossible to mute. A reminder that art, when shared and sung and held collectively, becomes a kind of shelter. A place to return to. A place that returns to you.



emotional and visual texture, creating a meditative celebration that was both jubilant and reflective.

HSBC CEO Md Mahbub ur Rahman underscored Tagore's enduring moral force, saying, "We do not take this moment—or your presence—for granted. You are here because of your deep affinity for culture, heritage, music, and Tagore himself. Today, we honour

Nasir Uddin Khan, widely recognised for his breakout performance in *Myself Allen Swapan*, has joined the cast of Shakib Khan-starrer upcoming Eid release *Prince*, producer Shirin Sultana confirmed.

This is his first major on-screen collaboration with Shakib, following an earlier appearance together in a TV commercial. Directed by Abu Hayat Mahmud and produced by

Creative Land Films, *Prince* is being developed as a full-scale action film.

Principal photography is set to begin on December 15, when the team will also unveil the film's first look and poster. Alongside Shakib Khan, the project features Tasnia Farin and Kolkata actress Jyotirmoyee Kundu, with the makers aiming to generate early buzz as promotional activities roll out.

WHAT'S THE HAPS

'Wavefest Season 01'

Wavefest Season 01 gathers K a a v i s h and leading Bangladeshi



acts for a rare winter-night convergence of music and mood. The event promises a sensory swell—intimate, atmospheric, and culturally resonant—offering Dhaka audiences a chance to witness artistry that lingers long after the final note.

Date: Friday | Dec 5, 2025

Time: 10am-8pm

Venue: Courtside, Madani Avenue

Cannes-winning director Jafar Panahi receives prison sentence, travel ban



Iran has sentenced Palme d'Or-winning filmmaker Jafar Panahi to one year in prison and imposed a two-year travel ban, convicting him in absentia for "propaganda activities" against the state, his lawyer said on Monday, December 1. Panahi, 65, is currently outside Iran.

The ruling follows his Cannes win for *It Was Just an Accident*, a drama about former inmates confronting a man they believe was their jailer.

Panahi, a prominent Iranian filmmaker, has faced longstanding state pressure, including a 2010 ban on filmmaking and travel after supporting anti-government protests.

Despite restrictions, he continued making films, including *This Is Not a Film* and *Taxi*. The verdict highlights ongoing risks for Iranian artists critical of the government.

Shakib Khan-starrer 'Prince' casts Nasir Uddin Khan in key role



NEWS

Israeli forces raze Gaza buildings

FROM PAGE 12
told Israel on Monday to avoid destabilising Syria and its new leadership, days after a deadly operation by Israeli forces killed 13 people, reports AFP.

Trump spoke to Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and invited him for another White House visit, Netanyahu's office said shortly after Trump issued the warning.

"It is very important that Israel maintain a strong and true dialogue with Syria, and that nothing takes place that will interfere with Syria's evolution into

a prosperous State," Trump said on his Truth Social platform.

Meanwhile, UK Foreign Secretary Yvette Cooper yesterday called on Israel to "allow much more aid in and open all the routes and crossings immediately".

The Foreign Office announced that more than 1,000 tents have been allowed into Gaza following months of delay.

Cooper's announcement comes amid repeated calls from human rights groups and protesters for the government to end its alleged

complicity in Israel's genocidal war on Gaza, as it provides vital components of F-35 jets and operates Shadow R1 surveillance flights over the enclave.

In Gaza, Hamas said it was handing over the remains of one of the two last hostage bodies still in Gaza yesterday, and Israel said it was preparing to receive "findings".

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's office said in a statement that forensic testing would be done after a transfer via the Red Cross to Israeli forces in Gaza.

Teachers call off strike

FROM PAGE 1
Secondary and Higher Education (DSHE) instructing schools to continue examinations "under any circumstances".

The letters also asked regional officials to identify and report teachers obstructing exams.

Despite the move, most schools did not hold examinations yesterday.

The government had toughened its stance on Monday evening, when Education Adviser CR Abrar told BSS that halting examinations violated service rules.

Calling the use of students' exams as leverage "unacceptable", he said the demand for grade 9 was neither part of teachers' job terms.

Even so, the nationwide teachers' strike continued.

All 29 government secondary schools in Noakhali, Feni and Lakshmpur suspended examinations for the second day yesterday.

Students arriving for Bangla, General Science and Mathematics papers found classrooms locked and staffrooms empty.

Sidratul Muntaha and Bibi Fatema, class-V students at Noakhali Government Girls' High School, said their exams began on November 25 and four tests were completed.

"Today we came to sit for the Bangla exam, but we saw a lock on the

classroom door. The teachers are not here. Now we are going back home," they said.

Guardians expressed frustration, saying repeated uncertainty had discouraged children from studying.

Several parents said they were forced to take leave from work after bringing their children to school only to find the exams were postponed again.

"Our children stop studying as soon as they hear the exam is not happening," said Jannatul Ferdous, a guardian at the school.

After keeping private tutors all year and bearing school expenses, the children's annual exam is not being held, she said.

"This is unacceptable. We are not willing to accept any games being played with the students' future between the teachers and the government," she said.

There is no point in suspending the children's exams to achieve demands, said Humayun Kabir, another guardian.

"If you want to realise your demands, protest in the political arena," he said.

Md Jahangir Alam, acting headmaster of Noakhali Government Girls' High School, said the institution halted all exams from Monday "in line with the national programme".

Examinations across all government secondary schools in Bandarban were suspended. At Bandarban Government Girls' High School, class-X students who

arrived to sit for their General Science exam were sent back.

Primary schools are also affected as teachers continued their boycotts.

However, teachers there are divided in their approach. One group of government primary school teachers under the banner of the Primary Teachers' Demand Implementation Council continued their full-day work abstention yesterday while keeping annual examinations suspended.

They began their movement with three demands, including placement in grade 10, but later suspended the programme after assurances were given that they would be placed in grade 11.

Meanwhile, another alliance has given the government time until Wednesday.

The Primary Assistant Teachers' Organisation Unity Council warned that if demands are not met, schools across the country will be locked down from Thursday.

Their three-point demand includes raising the pay scale to grade 10, resolving complexities in obtaining higher grades after 10 and 16 years and ensuring 100 percent departmental promotion to head teacher posts.

The Directorate of Primary Education has asked all officials to ensure exams continue and warned of action against any teacher failing to conduct tests properly.

Imran Khan 'perfectly fine'

FROM PAGE 12
Uzma said the meeting lasted around 30 minutes.

The development comes amid the PTT's protests outside the Islamabad High Court and the Adiala jail yesterday against restrictions on the former prime minister's visitation rights. The party had claimed that the ex-premier's

family and party leaders had been denied access to him for the last several weeks.

According to Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Chief Minister Sohail Afridi, no one had been allowed to meet Imran or his wife, Bushra Bibi, since October 27.

Section 144 of the Criminal Procedure Code was imposed in

Islamabad and Rawalpindi ahead of PTT's protests. It is a legal provision that empowers district administrations to prohibit an assembly of four or more people in an area for a limited period.

Earlier in the day, Minister of State for Interior Tallal Chaudhry said that compliance with Section 144 would be ensured in Islamabad and Rawalpindi.

Healthcare workers' demo

FROM PAGE 12
On November 25, they, under the banner of the Medical Technologist and Pharmacist 10th Grade Implementation Council, announced a series of programmes to raise their entry post to grade 10 instead of grade 11.

They observed a two-hour work abstention on Sunday, leaving many patients without services. Medical technologists conduct laboratory tests that help doctors diagnose and treat patients, while pharmacists supply prescribed medicines at hospitals.

Ripon Shikdar, coordinator of the council, said around 13,000 medical technologists work at government medical facilities.

The health ministry has, on several occasions, assured them that their demand would be met, but it has yet to be implemented, he said.

Referendum

FROM PAGE 1
"We are considering doubling the chambers in some cases if possible. We will finalise it in the meeting on the 7th," he added.

Currently, voting in the national elections takes place from 8:00am to 4:00pm without a break.

For the election planned in February, the EC has designated 42,761 polling centres and 244,739 booths nationwide: one centre for every 3,000 voters, with one booth for every 500 male voters and 400 female voters.

EC officials noted that these calculations apply only to the parliamentary election. Since both the election and referendum will be held simultaneously, the number of booths will need to be increased, even if the number of centres remains the same, since casting two ballots will take longer.

Anwarul hinted that the election schedule is likely to be announced sometime between December 8 and 14 this year and that the national polls and referendum are likely to take place between February 8 and 14 next year.

EC officials explained that voting days are usually chosen with weekly holidays in mind—either the first working day of the week (Sunday) or the last (Thursday). Based on past practice, the EC Secretariat will propose multiple dates, from which the commission will select one.

"We will go for a full day complete shutdown at all government and private hospitals, clinics, diagnostic centres, and health education institutions on Thursday unless our demand is met."

Ripon added that they held separate meetings with secretaries of health and public administration ministries yesterday, and both assured them that their demand would be met. "But we are not convinced and will therefore move forward with tomorrow's [today's] programme," he told this newspaper last night.

At a rally on November 23, Bangladesh Nurses Association and Bangladesh Midwifery Society announced programmes to press home their eight-point demand, including scrapping the reported plan to abolish the Directorate General of Nursing and Midwifery.

They staged two-hour demonstrations on November 26, 27, and 30 at medical facilities across the country, hampering healthcare services.

They were supposed to go for a "complete shutdown" at all medical facilities yesterday, but it was postponed after the health ministry called a meeting over their demand, said Asaduzzaman Jewel, secretary general of the Bangladesh Nurses Association.

Talking to The Daily Star last night, Shariful Islam, president of the association, said they had a fruitful meeting with the health secretary. "We will set our next course of action after holding a meeting tonight [last night]."

The Daily Star could not reach Health Secretary Saidur Rahman for comments, as he did not respond to our phone calls.

FRAUD PROBE 3 arrested as EU diplomatic arm raided

AFP, Brussels

Police arrested three people yesterday following raids on EU offices and a prestigious graduate school in a probe into suspected fraud linked to the training of future diplomats, prosecutors said.

The European Public Prosecutor's Office (EPPO) said searches were carried out at the College of Europe in the Belgian city of Bruges, and the Brussels premises of the European External Action Service—the EU's diplomatic wing.

The raids were "part of a probe into suspected fraud related to EU-funded training for junior diplomats", said an EPPO statement, adding that "three suspects were detained."

Chiefs of 3 services

FROM PAGE 1

A medical board of local and foreign specialists is overseeing her treatment. Two specialist medical teams from the UK and China are scheduled to arrive in Dhaka this morning to assist the medical board. Security has been tightened around the hospital amid Khaleda's treatment.

On Monday, the government declared Khaleda a "very important person" and provided her with the protection of the Special Security Force.

A week on

FROM PAGE 3
"Even though we keep the same hours now, sales have dropped by half because we have fewer products and less investment," she said.

A week after the fire, normal life has yet to return to the slum. Like the two, many other Korail residents are now struggling to piece their lives back together and return to where their lives were before the fire.

Many residents have left the city after losing everything, while others depend on aid. Some, like Shafiqul and Fatema, are borrowing money to rebuild.

Others, including the elderly, are being forced to work for survival. Sixty-year-old Ismail Hossain and his wife, Sufia Begum, have lived in Korail for 32 years. Their home, given to them by Ismail's in-laws, was destroyed.

They now live under temporary tin sheets that leak when it rains. "Right after the fire, we received blankets and Tk 2,000 from BRAC. We used the money to buy tin sheets for a temporary shelter. We also received some cooked meals, which lasted a few days. But last night, we didn't get any food, so my husband had to go out to work despite his age," Sufia said.

"Ismail used to work only three days a week, but now he has no choice. We have nothing left," she added. Many survivors say they have received little to no assistance so far. Some families have sent members back to their villages because they cannot afford to stay.

Khalilur Rahman, 60, who lived with his six-member family, also lost his home. "We haven't received significant relief since the fire. We don't have the money to rebuild, so I sent my family to the village. I reopened my small shop and will send money when I can. If we get aid to rebuild, I will bring my family back to Korail," he said.



A Dhaka North City Corporation vehicle sprinkles water as it moves along the Tejaon Truck Stand Road yesterday to help curb dust pollution during the dry season.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

Auto-rickshaw driver shot dead

FROM PAGE 3
Police are conducting drives to arrest Bapparaj, he said.

Speaking to this newspaper, Montu, who is also an auto-rickshaw driver, said, "On Monday morning, Pappu went to visit his in-laws' house next to ours with his wife and children. In the evening, we heard narcotics trader Bapparaj shot him and left him there."

They later found Pappu with bullet wounds at Ad

Din Hospital and rushed him to Dhaka Medical College Hospital, where doctors declared him dead.

Montu said, "There had been no previous conflict between his family and the accused. They shot my son for no reason."

"I had only two sons. They shot one of them dead..."

Pappu's younger brother, Hriday Sheikh, who works at an internet office, said Bapparaj is the son of another top drug dealer Kana Jabbar and

is widely known in the locality. "As far as we know, my brother had no dispute with Bapparaj or anyone else. My brother is gone. What will happen to his child now?"

OC Ayub said CCTV footage shows Pappu scuffling with Bapparaj and seven to eight others.

At one stage, either Bapparaj or someone else shot him. He was taken to a private hospital and later shifted to DMCH, where he died, the OC added.

Bangladesh can 'reset the narrative'

FROM PAGE 3
mission to Bangladesh to observe what will be the largest democratic exercise of 2026 anywhere in the world.

On preparations for the 13th national polls, he said, "We see that preparations are well in hand. There will inevitably be challenges; you have a huge population and it is the first time for

many of your citizens to go to the polls for a number of reasons."

"So, there is a job now of civic voter education that has to be completed," he said. Voters must understand both the election and the referendum, which he described as a very exciting moment for this country. "What we are discussing

with all of the Bangladeshi stakeholders involved in this vote is how you mitigate the risks and how you ensure that the elections are smooth and participatory. That's what we want to see," he said.

He said the EU will continue to support the holding of the first democratic elections that Bangladesh has seen in a very long time.

Abdul Gofran passes away

STAR REPORT

Scientist, academic, civil servant and freedom fighter Md Abdul Gofran passed away yesterday morning. He was 88.

He left behind his wife, two sons and two daughters, several grandchildren and countless loved ones to mourn his demise. One of his sons, Md Ashraf Kamal, is currently a High Court judge.

Born on January 1, 1937, in Choumuhoni of Begumganj of Noakhali, Gofran was a pioneer in the discourse and expansion of eco friendly energy in Bangladesh. He served as a long-term biogas consultant at Grameen Shakti. He also served as chairman of the Bangladesh Biogas Development Foundation, said a press release.

During the Liberation War, Gofran fought in the Betiyara Battle in Feni.



Need stronger political

FROM PAGE 3

Meanwhile, Huq cautioned that employment policies alone cannot address the dual discrimination faced by women with disabilities, who encounter both gender and disability-based exclusion.

"Women with disabilities face higher risks of sexual, psychological and physical violence. Adequate protective measures and legal support systems are urgently needed," he said.

"Even when abuse occurs within families or institutions, most cases remain hidden and justice is rarely served. The state must ensure safe shelters and accessible justice mechanisms," he added. "Inclusive education must be expanded,

workplaces must prioritise accessibility, and reproductive and sexual health services should be readily available. Separate government initiatives and active participation of women with disabilities in implementing the Disability Rights and Protection Act are crucial."

He also said there are still no higher secondary Braille textbooks, and many online materials are inaccessible to screen readers. Most digital platforms fail to meet international WCAG standards, and developers often lack training.

Looking ahead, Huq highlighted three priorities for the next five years: ensuring school enrolment for all children with disabilities,

fully implementing the Disability Rights and Protection Act with active participation of persons with disabilities, and establishing a dedicated Ministry of Disability Development and Empowerment to centrally coordinate policies, budgets, and services.

He also stressed the need to change social attitudes. Textbooks, media and digital platforms should portray persons with disabilities as capable and active members of society.

"Economic empowerment is key," Huq concluded. "Financial independence shifts societal attitudes and enables persons with disabilities to fully participate in every aspect of life."

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh

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

e-Tender Notice

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

Table with 3 columns: Sl. No., Tender ID No., Title of Procurement. Row 1: 01, 1187993, Procurement of "Rapid Diagnostic Test"

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

Cancellation Notice

Table with 4 columns: Sl. No., Tender ID No., Title of Procurement, Newspaper Name & Publication Date. Row 1: 01, 1181819, This tender is cancelled, The Daily Jangoran, dt. 26-11-2025 & The Daily Star, dt. 26-11-2025

Md. Huzur Ali
Director (Additional Secretary)
Central Medical Stores Depot
Tejgaon, Dhaka
Tel: 02-22244087
E-mail: cmsd@cmsd.gov.bd

GD-2621

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh

Roads & Highways Department
Office of the Executive Engineer
Road Division, Manikganj.
www.rhd.gov.bd

Memo No. 35.01.5600.444.07.010.25-4099

Dated: 01/12/2025

e-Tender Corrigendum Notice

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

Table with 3 columns: Tender Notice & ID No., Name of work, Last selling, closing date & time. Row 1: 01/e-GP/ PMP/ EE/ Mkg.Rd/2025-26, Periodic Maintenance Program for DBS Base Course & DBS Wearing Course including Strengthening by Aggregate Base Type-I at Ch. 10+500 Km (Kawalipara) to 16+000Km (Syed Mor) of Kalampur Bus Stand-Kawalipara-Balia Warshai - Mirzapur Road (R- 503) Under Manikganj Road Division during the year 2025- 2026, 21-Dec-2025 17:00 & 22-Dec-2025 12:15

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

GD-2634

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh

Ministry of Women and Children Affairs
Prevention of Violence and Harmful Practices Against Children and Women in Bangladesh (PVHP) Project
Bangladesh Shishu Academy, Doyel Chattar Sarak, Shahbag, Dhaka-1000

Ref: MoWCA/PVHP/Recruitment/2025-04-155

Date: 3/12/2025

Request for Expression of Interest (EOI)

The Prevention of Violence and Harmful Practices Against Children and Women in Bangladesh (PVHP) Project, implemented by the Ministry of Women and Children Affairs (MoWCA) and UNICEF, aims to establish an effective child protection system at both national and subnational levels. The project promotes a community-led approach to prevent violence and traditional harmful practices against women and children across all 64 districts of Bangladesh. The PVHP Project is seeking applications from qualified national consultants/experts under the Individual Consultant Selection (ICS) method for the following positions:

Table with 3 columns: SL, Name of the Consulting Position, No. of position. Rows: 1 Program Operations Expert (POE), 2 Monitoring and Documentation Expert (M&DE), 3 Financial Management Expert (FME), 4 Associate Financial Consultant (AFC), 5 Planning Officer (PO)

Terms and Conditions:

- 1. Qualified and eligible individuals are encouraged to apply with an updated CV, 2 copies of passport-size photographs with a cover letter justifying suitability to the Project Director, PVHP Project, Ministry of Women and Children Affairs, Bangladesh Shishu Academy Bhaban, Doyel Chattar Sarak, Sahabag, Dhaka-1000.
2. Applications must be submitted in a sealed envelope either in person or by post at: Project Director, PVHP Project, Ministry of Women and Children Affairs, Bangladesh Shishu Academy Bhaban, Doyel Chattar Sarak, Sahabag, Dhaka-1000, no later than 5:00pm on 30 December 2025.
3. The maximum age limit for applicants is 62 years as on 30 December 2025.
4. Applicants must include relevant supporting documents attesting to their qualifications and professional experience along with the application.
5. Shortlisted candidates will be invited for an interview at a date and time to be communicated by the project authority.
6. Applicants currently employed in government or other organizations must apply through the proper channel.
7. Late or incomplete applications will not be accepted under any circumstances.
8. The duty station is Dhaka, with frequent field visits required as part of the role.
9. 12 Months (Extendable based on yearly performance and funding availability up to project period)
10. The authority reserves the right to accept or reject any application without assigning any reason.

The details of the REOI are available at the website of the Ministry of Women and Children Affairs, www.mowca.gov.bd.

(Dr. Shamima Nasrin)
Joint Secretary &
Project Director of PVHP Project

GD-2627



গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার

বাংলাদেশ পুলিশ
পুলিশ সুপারের কার্যালয়, লক্ষ্মীপুর
https://police.lakshmpur.gov.bd

নিয়োগ বিজ্ঞপ্তি

স্মারক নং-নিয়োগ বিজ্ঞপ্তি/২০২৫/৪৭০১/১ম

তারিখঃ ০১ ডিসেম্বর, ২০২৫খ্রিঃ

স্বরাষ্ট্র মন্ত্রণালয়, পুলিশ-২ শাখা এর স্মারক নং-৪৪.০০.০০০০.০০০.০৯৫.০২.০০০১.২২.৫২, তারিখঃ ২৬/১০/২০২৫খ্রিঃ এবং পুলিশ ডেপুটি কমিশনারি স্মারক নং-৪৪.০১.০০০০.০২৮.১৮.০৪৪.২০২১/২৮২৬, তারিখঃ ১০/১১/২০২৫খ্রিঃ মূলে প্রাপ্ত ছাড়পত্রের পরিপ্রেক্ষিতে লক্ষ্মীপুর জেলা পুলিশ সুপারের কার্যালয়ের নিম্নবর্ণিত শূন্য পদসমূহ পূরণের নিমিত্ত নিয়োগ বিধি ও শর্তসমূহাধীনে স্থায়ী ভিত্তিতে গোক নিয়োগের জন্য লক্ষ্মীপুর জেলার স্থায়ী বাসিন্দাদের নিকট হতে আগামী ৩১/১২/২০২৫খ্রিঃ তারিখের মধ্যে অফিসে কর্তৃক নির্ধারিত আবেদন ফরমে স্ব-হস্তে লিখিত দরখাস্ত আহ্বান করা যাচ্ছে।

Table with 3 columns: স্র. (Serial), পদের নাম (Post Name), পদের সংখ্যা (No. of Posts), গ্রেড ও বেতন ফেল (জাতীয় বেতন ফেল, ২০১৫ অনুযায়ী) (Grade and Pay Band (National Pay Band, 2015 based)), শিক্ষাগত ও অন্যান্য যোগ্যতা (Educational and other qualifications). Row 1: অফিস সহকারী কাম-কম্পিউটার মুদ্রাক্ষরিক (Office Assistant cum Computer Operator), ০৩ (তিন) টি (03 (Three) posts), গ্রেড-১৬ (৯৩০০-২২৪০/-) (Grade-16 (9300-2240/-)), (ক) বীকৃত বোর্ড হতে উচ্চ মাধ্যমিক বা সমমানের পরীক্ষায় উত্তীর্ণ হতে হবে। (খ) কম্পিউটার ব্যবহারের ক্ষেত্রে Word Processing/Data Entry Typing এর সর্বনিম্ন গতি প্রতিমিনিটে বাংলাতে ২০ ও ইংরেজিতে ২৮ শব্দ গতি সম্পন্ন থাকতে হবে। (গ) কম্পিউটারে Microsoft Word, Microsoft Excel, Microsoft Powerpoint এ কাজ করার দক্ষতা থাকতে হবে।

আবেদনকারীগণের জন্য প্রয়োজ্য/অনুসরণীয় শর্তাবলী

- ১. প্রার্থীকে অবশ্যই বাংলাদেশের নাগরিক ও লক্ষ্মীপুর জেলার স্থায়ী বাসিন্দা হতে হবে।
২. অফিস কর্তৃক নির্ধারিত আবেদন ফরমটি https://police.lakshmpur.gov.bd ওয়েবসাইটে পাওয়া যাবে।
৩. আবেদনপত্রের সাথে নিম্নোক্ত কাগজপত্রাদি সংযুক্ত করতে হবেঃ
(ক) সকল শিক্ষাগত যোগ্যতার মূল/সাময়িক সনদপত্র ১ম শ্রেণির সরকারি গেজেটেড কর্মকর্তা কর্তৃক সত্যায়িত ফটোকপি।
(খ) সরকারি প্রতিষ্ঠান কিংবা সরকার কর্তৃক অনুমোদিত প্রতিষ্ঠান হতে কম্পিউটার প্রশিক্ষণ/টিইপি প্রশিক্ষণ সনদের সত্যায়িত ফটোকপি।
(গ) ১ম শ্রেণির সরকারি গেজেটেড কর্মকর্তা কর্তৃক সত্যায়িত সদা তোলা রসিদ ০৪ (চার) কপি পাসপোর্ট সাইজের ছবি।
(ঘ) পৌরসভার মেয়র/ইউনিয়ন পরিষদ চেয়ারম্যান কর্তৃক প্রদত্ত হালনাগাদ (চলতি সনের) নাগরিকত্ব সনদপত্রের সত্যায়িত ফটোকপি।
(ঙ) জাতীয় পরিচয়পত্র/অনলাইন জন্মনিবন্ধন সনদপত্রের সত্যায়িত ফটোকপি।
(চ) আবেদনকারীকে পুলিশ সুপার, লক্ষ্মীপুর এর অনুকূলে বাংলাদেশ ব্যাংক/সোনালী ব্যাংকে জিএরি চালানোর মাধ্যমে ১০০/- (একশত) টাকা (অফেরতযোগ্য) কোড নং-৪৪২২০২৬ (পেরীক্ষা ফি) এ অটোমেটেড চালানে সরকারি কোষাগারে জমা করণের মূলকপি আবেদনপত্রের সাথে দাখিল করতে হবে এবং পদের নাম ও প্রার্থীর নাম টিকানা উল্লেখপূর্বক ১০/- (দশ) টাকার চিকিট লাগানো একটি ১০"x৪.৫" সাইজের ফেরত খাম আবেদনের সাথে দাখিল করতে হবে।
৪. পুলিশ সুপার, লক্ষ্মীপুর বরাবরে আবেদনপত্র আগামী ৩১/১২/২০২৫খ্রিঃ (অফিস চলাকালীন সময়) তারিখের মধ্যে অবশ্যই ডাকযোগে পৌঁছাতে হবে। হাতে হাতে কিংবা সরাসরি কোন আবেদনপত্র গৃহীত হবে না। নির্ধারিত তারিখের পরে প্রাপ্ত যে কোন আবেদন বাতিল বলে গণ্য হবে।
৫. প্রার্থীর বয়সসীমা ০২/১২/২০২৫খ্রিঃ তারিখ ১৮ থেকে ৩২ বছরের মধ্যে হতে হবে। সফল প্রার্থীর (বীর মুক্তিযোদ্ধা, বীর মুক্তিযোদ্ধার পুত্র/কন্যা, বীরান্বনর সন্তান, মুদ্র নৃ-গোষ্ঠী, শারীরিক প্রতিবন্ধী এবং তৃতীয় লিঙ্গ) ক্ষেত্রে ৩২ বছর। চাকরীর প্রার্থীদের ক্ষেত্রে বয়স শিথিলযোগ্য নয়। বয়স প্রমাণের ক্ষেত্রে কোন এফিডেভিট গ্রহণযোগ্য হবে না।
৬. বৈধ প্রার্থীপত্রকে লিখিত, ব্যবহারিক ও মৌখিক পরীক্ষায় অংশগ্রহণ করতে হবে। পরীক্ষার অংশগ্রহণের জন্য প্রার্থীকে কোন প্রকার চিএ/ডিএ প্রদান করা হবে না। সাক্ষাতকার গ্রহণকালীন প্রার্থীকে সকল সনদপত্রের মূলকপি উপস্থাপন করতে হবে।
৭. বর্ণিত পদের উপযুক্ত প্রার্থীদের লিখিত ও অন্যান্য পরীক্ষার তারিখ, স্থান ও সময় প্রার্থীদের দাখিলকৃত কাগজপত্র যাচাই-বাহাঈ শেষে বিভাগীয় নির্বাচনী বোর্ড, চট্টগ্রাম কর্তৃক প্রবেশপত্রের মাধ্যমে জানিয়ে দেওয়া হবে।
৮. আবেদন ফরমের সকল কলাম যথাযথভাবে পূরণ করতে হবে (প্রয়োজ্য ক্ষেত্রে)। প্রার্থীকে খামের উপর অবশ্যই প্রার্থীর পদের নাম স্পষ্টাক্ষরে লিখতে হবে। সরকারি/আধা-সরকারি/খায়তশাসিত সংস্থার চাকুরীতে নিয়োগিত প্রার্থীদের যথাযথ কর্তৃপক্ষের বাধ্যতামূলক আনুপ্রতিপত্রসহ নির্ধারিত সময়ের মধ্যে আবেদনপত্র নিম্নাধিকারকারীর কার্যালয়ে পৌঁছাতে হবে। এ ক্ষেত্রে আবেদনের কোন অগ্রিম কপি গ্রহণযোগ্য হবে না।
৯. অসম্পূর্ণ ও ত্রুটিপূর্ণ এবং বিলম্বে প্রাপ্ত আবেদন বাতিল বলে গণ্য হবে। সত্যায়নের ক্ষেত্রে অবশ্যই সত্যায়নকারী কর্মকর্তার সুস্পষ্ট নাম, পদবী ও সীলমোহরসহ হতে হবে।
১০. কোনো সম্পর্কিত জনস্বার্থসমূহ মন্ত্রণালয় কর্তৃক সর্বশেষ জারীকৃত সরকারি নীতিমালা এবং নিয়োগ সক্রান্তে অন্যান্য সরকারি বিধি-বিধান যথাযথভাবে অনুসরণ করা হবে।
১১. মুক্তিযোদ্ধা কোর্সে আবেদনকারী (বীর মুক্তিযোদ্ধা ও শহীদ বীর মুক্তিযোদ্ধার পুত্র-কন্যা) প্রার্থীদের ক্ষেত্রে সরকারের সর্বশেষ নীতিমালা অনুযায়ী মুক্তিযুদ্ধ বিষয়ক মন্ত্রণালয় কর্তৃক প্রদত্ত মুক্তিযোদ্ধা সনদ প্রদান করতে হবে। আবেদনকারী বীর মুক্তিযোদ্ধা ও শহীদ বীর মুক্তিযোদ্ধার পুত্র-কন্যা হলে আবেদনের সাথে সম্পর্কিত উল্লেখপূর্বক ১ম শ্রেণির গেজেটেড কর্মকর্তা অথবা সেক্ট্রিট ইউনিয়ন পরিষদের চেয়ারম্যান বা পৌরসভা মেয়র/প্রশাসক কর্তৃক প্রদত্ত প্রত্যায়নপত্র প্রদান করতে হবে।
১২. আবেদনপত্রে বর্ণিত কোন তথ্য যেকোন পর্যায়ে ভুল/মিথ্যা প্রমাণিত হলে দরখাস্ত/নিয়োগ বাতিল বলে গণ্য হবে এবং সেক্ট্রিট বাস্তব বিরুদ্ধে আইনমুগ্ন ব্যবস্থা গ্রহণ করা হবে।
১৩. যদি কোন প্রার্থী বাংলাদেশের নাগরিক না হন কিংবা বাংলাদেশের নাগরিক নন এমন কোনো ব্যক্তিকে বিয়ে করেন বা বিয়ে করার জন্য প্রতিকর্ষিত হন কিংবা কোন কৌজলপূর্ণ আদালত কর্তৃক ঠিকিক শুল্কাজানিত অভিযোগে দণ্ডিত হন কিংবা কোন সরকারি বা স্বায়তশাসিত প্রতিষ্ঠান বা স্থানীয় কর্তৃপক্ষের চাকরি হতে বরখাস্ত হয়ে থাকেন, তবে তিনি আবেদন করার যোগ্য হিসেবে বিবেচিত হবেন না।
১৪. চাকুরীতে নিয়োগের ক্ষেত্রে নিয়োগকারী কর্তৃপক্ষের সিদ্ধান্তই চূড়ান্ত বলে গণ্য হবে। এ বিষয়ে কোন প্রকার আপত্তি গ্রহণযোগ্য হবে না।
১৫. কর্তৃপক্ষ প্রয়োজনবোধে যেকোনো শর্ত সংযোজন, সংশোধন ও পরিবর্তন করতে পারবে।
১৬. সরকারি কাজের স্বার্থে প্রয়োজনে এই বিজ্ঞপ্তি আংশিক বা সম্পূর্ণ সংশোধন/বাতিল করার ক্ষমতা কর্তৃপক্ষ সংরক্ষণ করে।

মোঃ আবু তারেক
বিপি-৭৯০৮১২১৫৩৩
পুলিশ সুপার, লক্ষ্মীপুর
ফোনঃ ০২৩০৪৪৪১০৩৩, ফ্যাক্সঃ ০২৩০৪৪৪১৪৭৯
Email: splakshmpur@police.gov.bd

GD-2624



The Daily Star

Transitioning from Bank Finance to CAPITAL MARKET FINANCE

A roundtable titled “Bridging the Gap: Transitioning from Bank Finance to Capital Market Finance” was held on 05 November 2025, at The Daily Star Centre, Dhaka. Jointly organised by IDLC Investment Limited and The Daily Star, the dialogue brought together policymakers from the country’s financial sector, representatives from regulatory bodies, bank representatives, leaders from the banking and corporate world, and distinguished professionals from the capital market. The Roundtable aimed at deliberating upon potential reduction of Bangladesh’s dependency on banks and building a strong, long-term, and investment-capable capital market.



Mesbah Uddin Ahmed
Managing Director of IDLC Investment Limited

Keynote Presenter

Bangladesh continues to rely overwhelmingly on bank financing, while equity financing remains largely untapped. According to a World Bank survey, only 0.5% of Bangladeshi businesses consider equity as a funding option, compared to 6.9% in India. Our capital market remains shallow, with market capitalisation at just 7.3% of GDP—far below regional peers such as Vietnam (51%) and India (133%). At the same time, fresh industrial term loan disbursement has surged from Tk 68,000 crore in 2021 to Tk 1.06 lakh crore in 2024, whereas capital market fund-raising (IPOs and rights) has collapsed from Tk 1,610 crore in 2021 to only Tk 302 crore in 2025.

This imbalance has left many firms heavily leveraged, facing rising interest burdens and liquidity stress. Banks, too, are under pressure, with Tk 3.45 trillion in non-performing loans and a capital shortfall of Tk 1.55 lakh crore. Easy access to bank credit—combined with governance weaknesses—has encouraged businesses to depend disproportionately on debt while avoiding the equity market. At the same time, rigid valuation rules, lengthy listing procedures, limited tax incentives, and poor market perception have further discouraged companies from coming to the market.

To change this trajectory, greater regulatory flexibility is essential. Streamlined approval processes, digitalised documentation, and meaningful incentives—especially for priority sectors such as garments and agro-industries—can help attract more issuers. Rebuilding investor confidence must remain a policy priority. In parallel, Bangladesh Bank must ensure stronger supervision and prudent leverage across the banking sector to reduce systemic risks.

Despite the challenges, investor appetite is clearly strong: recent IPOs have been oversubscribed multiple times. If we address regulatory bottlenecks and strengthen governance, both the equity and bond markets can expand substantially. This will reduce the economy’s overdependence on banks and help build a healthier, more balanced financial system for the future.



Rashiduzzaman CFA, FRM
Head of Investment Banking, IDLC Investments

IDLC Investments has reviewed the potential implications of the new BSEC guidelines. While the requirement for stock exchanges to provide feedback within 45–60 days may expedite IPO approvals, it also places significant pressure on exchange capacity as they assume greater responsibilities.

The proposed restriction on using IPO proceeds for loan repayment may deter many strong and mature companies from seeking listings. These businesses often pursue IPOs not for new projects, but for strategic reasons such as improving capital structure, strengthening governance, or enhancing brand visibility. Limiting eligibility only to firms with new investment projects would reduce the pipeline of potential issuers, further shrinking the supply of quality stocks in an already shallow market.

Although the guideline adopts global valuation practices, the NAV-based pricing cap disadvantages asset-light sectors such as technology and services. Additionally, requiring indicative prices from 75 institutional investors may discourage companies from using the book-building method, while the fixed-price method’s limit of BDT 100 crore post-IPO capital effectively shuts out mid- to large-sized firms. The proposed 180-day lock-in for institutional investors adds another layer of deterrence.

To create a more enabling environment and broaden the issuer base, we recommend introducing a true Dutch auction mechanism for valuation, which could address several of the challenges currently observed.



Rupali Haque Chowdhury
President, Bangladesh Association of Publicly Listed Companies (BAPLC)

I believe one of the key barriers to market growth

lies in the lengthy and cumbersome approval process at the Securities and Exchange Commission, which must be streamlined. Many companies remain unprepared for listing due to limited compliance capacity, weak governance, and informal family-based management structures. Our investment-to-GDP ratio has fallen to just 3.67%, the lowest in recent years, reflecting deep investor uncertainty. Moreover, corruption, information leakage, and inconsistent regulations between bodies like the BSEC, NBR, and IMF driven tax authorities severely erode business confidence. For instance, multinational investors such as Grameenphone have faced policy reversals, discouraging future investment. Automation, digital tracking of files, and a single financial reporting system are critical to ensuring transparency and accountability. If we fail to create a predictable regulatory environment, good companies will stay away. Sustainable growth demands consistency, fairness, and an ecosystem where entrepreneurs can thrive and employment can expand.

systemic pressure on banks and build a balanced, sustainable financial ecosystem.



Shahidul Islam, CFA
CEO, VIPB Asset Management Company

As an investor, I have observed that although Bangladesh has around 400 listed companies, professional and foreign investors seriously consider only 25 to 30 of them. Many listed entities lack transparency, sound governance, or even genuine corporate structure. In our economy, companies often take “corporate” loans backed by personal guarantees, revealing a deep structural flaw. These are not true corporations. The banking system itself suffers from weak enforcement, wilful defaults, and the absence of accountability. History shows this pattern: in the late 1990s, a major conglomerate defaulted on its debenture obligations, yet later raised over Tk 3,000 crore again, without consequence. Unless financial

bought 25 years ago for 500,000 taka in owner’s name, now valued at 20 crore, must be formally transferred to the company to satisfy BSEC rules, adding cost and complexity. Without addressing these structural and procedural issues, the transition to the capital market remains stalled.



Sabbir Ahmed, FCA
Partner, Hoda Vasi Chowdhury & Co

I represent the chartered accountant community, and while allegations of fabricated financial statements in the listing process have surfaced, ICAB’s Document Verification System (DVS), implemented four years ago, ensures each statement has a unique DVC code, allowing verification of auditors, revenue, and net assets. Our stock market is heavily retail driven, with institutional investment almost negligible, and many first-generation business owners maintain a sole proprietorship mind-

years without cashing out, we plan to implement share swaps to stabilise the market rather than immediate payouts. The current panic is intense, but by prioritising small depositors and executing a structured turnaround plan, we aim to restore trust and gradually strengthen the banking system. Patience and careful planning are essential for lasting results.



Momtinul Islam
Chairman, Dhaka Stock Exchange

Let us understand the holistic development of the capital market, emphasising that over-reliance on banks for financing must shift toward a balanced equity and debt market. Our economy is at a crossroads, requiring corporate recapitalisation to enable financial intermediaries and corporates to grow. Current IPO processes are slow due to distrust in financial statements, leading to high compliance costs that exceed global standards. I advocate for alternative approaches, such as bank-



Reza Uddin Ahmad
Executive Director, Finance and Investments, City Group

I have spent decades in corporate banking and investment, and now at City Group, I am guiding our transition toward greater financial transparency and capital market readiness. Following the passing of our founder in 2023, we have diversified into six to seven new industries within the country’s emerging economic zones. However, over the past two years, the taka has devalued by nearly 45%, causing significant foreign exchange losses. Banks and NBFIs are facing capital erosion, shrinking their single borrower exposure limits and reducing overall lending capacity. Recognising this, we are preparing for listing, private equity partnerships, and international investments. Our focus now is on strong governance: independent boards, quarterly reporting, and environmental compliance to align with global standards. I believe that as the availability of bank financing declines, the future of corporate growth in Bangladesh will depend on structured reforms, transparency, and active participation in the capital market.



Mazeda Khatun
President, Bangladesh Merchant Bankers Association (BMBA)

As a representative of the Merchant Bankers’ Association, I believe our merchant banking activities have become far too narrow, limited mostly to IPO management. Merchant banks should play a much broader role in covering valuation, mergers and acquisitions, capital structuring, and advisory services that help companies prepare for listing. Without strengthening this supply side of the capital market, reliance on bank financing will continue, worsening issues like non-performing loans (NPLs). In the past two years, no new IPOs have been launched, leaving many merchant banks with idle capacity. I strongly advocate that Bangladesh Bank, BSEC, and FID jointly develop a framework to integrate merchant banks into national financial planning particularly in financing of national projects, budget formulation, and bond/Sukuk issuance. Proper coordination, automation, and strategic planning can ensure fair valuation and restore investor confidence. Strengthening merchant banks is essential to reduce

statements become credible and corporate laws are enforced, neither banking nor capital markets can function properly. We must restore integrity, ensure that false reporting is punished, and demand truthful disclosure. Only then will genuine companies emerge and sustainable capital market growth become possible.



Saiful Islam
President of the Dhaka Stock Exchange Brokers Association

I believe that inconsistent tax policies continue to undermine investor confidence and market stability. When the government reverses tax assurances, for instance, shifting rates from 37% to 42%, it directly hurts minority shareholders and erodes credibility. The banking sector currently provides nearly 98% of total financing, while the capital market contributes only 2%, showing how dependent we remain on debt. Our bond market has stagnated, with most bonds being inter-bank cross-financing, and the mutual fund industry has failed to mature. Without strengthening institutional investors and asset managers, genuine price discovery cannot occur. Meanwhile, many banks face capital shortfalls yet cannot turn to an underdeveloped capital market for recapitalisation. I strongly advocate for a five-to-seven-year transition framework, improved oversight of unlisted companies, and coordinated reform between BSEC, Bangladesh Bank, and NBR to ensure sustainable financial stability.



Ahmed Rashid Lali
Former President, DSE Brokers Association

I see the primary barrier to transitioning from bank financing to the equity market as the speed of access to funds. Entrepreneurs can get financing from banks within 15 to 30 days, but listing on the stock market takes 1–2 years, discouraging participation despite lower equity costs. Under the new law, the Dhaka Stock Exchange is given 45–60 days for draft prospectus review, but this can be shortened using a panel of seven chartered accountants, as we successfully demonstrated during my tenure on the board. By streamlining queries and consolidating documentation, the process can realistically be completed in 45–60 days. Another obstacle is asset registration: for instance, land

set even in thousand-crore turnover companies, which weakens internal controls and governance. Continuous disclosure obligations deter potential multinational investors, while compliant companies face effective tax rates over 40% due to minimum tax. Policy inconsistency, particularly from the NBR, and the banking system’s reliance on personal guarantees instead of verified financial statements further discourage capital market participation, underscoring the need for stronger discipline and systemic reform.



Shaheen Iqbal, CFA
Deputy Managing Director, Brac Bank PLC

I believe the capital market is not in competition with banks but must become attractive and efficient to draw investors and issuers. Currently, 90% of total corporate financing comes from banks, highlighting the lack of alternative investment channels. Many client balance sheets are over-leveraged and require restructuring, which banks often provide due to the absence of an active capital market. Trust is critical; fewer than 25 companies are reliably investable, leaving retail investors vulnerable. Initiatives are underway to build the market: we issued the first affordable housing bond, subordinate bonds with 73% non-bank subscription, and social bonds targeting diverse investors. These steps aim to create liquidity in the secondary market and encourage broader participation. Gradually, as the capital market becomes more efficient and trustworthy, it can complement banking finance, reducing over-reliance on banks while supporting structured capital raising for sustainable growth.



Istequeham Hussain
Director (Debt Management Department), Bangladesh Bank

I am implying that we have focused on small depositors, not large investors, to maintain confidence in the banking system. Bangladesh Bank always prioritises restructuring weak banks, and many banks that were weak 20 years back have already turned around. Our capacity is steadily improving, supported by the World Bank, IMF, and domestic task forces, including several local experts. Drawing from the Indian experience, where five banks were successfully merged over 20

guaranteed bonds or asset-backed securities, which can build investor trust and reduce reliance on personal guarantees. For instance, if Brac Bank issues a 25% first-loss guaranteed bond, investors perceive it as safe. Strengthening both debt and equity markets, alongside collaboration between Bangladesh Bank, BSEC, DSE, and NBR, is essential to stabilise the financial ecosystem and ensure long-term market confidence.



Md Saifuddin, CFA
Commissioner, Bangladesh Securities and Exchange Commission (BSEC)

I am focusing on the structural issues of the capital market, emphasising that the transition from bank financing to market-based finance requires addressing deep-rooted incentives and behavioural patterns. Over the past 15–16 years, pervasive incentives and regulatory forbearance have allowed opportunistic firms to dominate, while good companies avoided the market. For instance, 60 merchant banks manage total capital raises of only 300–600 crore taka, reflecting inefficiencies and distorted valuation methods. The market has been shaped by information asymmetry, wealth concentration, and behavioural degeneracy, rather than economic principles. True equity valuation must consider operating capital and earning power, not just asset liquidation values. Protecting minority shareholders and ensuring fair regulation is critical to attract generational capital, build investor trust, and create a functioning, transparent capital market.



Tanjim Ferdous
In-Charge, NGOs & Foreign Missions, The Daily Star
Moderator of the Session

As we conclude today’s session, it is clear that Bangladesh must reduce its bank-dependency, with bank loans at 36% of GDP versus capital market capitalisation of 13%. Strengthening the capital market through quality listings, simplified IPO and bond processes, and greater institutional investor participation is essential. Our goal is a balanced, sustainable financial system where banks and markets complement each other. Insights from today’s discussion will inform actionable policy recommendations, helping to build investor confidence, deepen liquidity, and support long-term economic growth in Bangladesh.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- » **Flexible IPO process:** True Dutch auction should be implemented without requiring the need of indicative price. Alternatively, indicative price may be proposed by the Issuer and Issue Manager. Further, valuation Cap at NAV and limiting Post-IPO Paid up capital to 100 crore for fixed price method should be excluded.
- » **Use of IPO Proceeds:** IPO proceeds should be permitted for debt repayment to attract stronger issuers and strengthen overall market depth.
- » **Transition to Market-Driven Valuation Methods:** Adopt flexible, international valuation standards that reflect true company potential.
- » **Introduce Targeted Tax Incentives for Listing:** Provide tax benefits to incentivise private companies to go public.
- » **Ensure Enforcement and Accountability:** Impose strict consequences for financial misreporting and wilful default to restore trust.

TIGERS UPBEAT but problems persist

by EKUSH TAPADER from Ctg

As it often happens, a victory -- especially before a major tournament -- can lift the mood within the Bangladesh team.

Yesterday was no different. There was a stark contrast between the Litton Das who spoke to the media after Bangladesh's comeback series win over Ireland in Chattogram and the one who faced reporters a week earlier, just before the three-match series began.

Smiling, relaxed, even cracking jokes, skipper Litton was understandably delighted after the Tigers sealed the series 2-1 with a dominant eight-wicket win on Tuesday, despite being thrashed in the opener.

Just days ago, Litton had entered the pre-series press conference with a stern expression and raised doubts about continuing as captain. This time, he brushed aside any uncertainty about his leadership and spoke openly about his World Cup ambitions ahead of the tournament starting next February.

But have all reasons for concern disappeared? The simple answer is: No.

Addressing the continued struggles of the middle order, which again failed to score in this series, Litton downplayed the issue, saying what "matters most now is to play well in the World Cup".

One thing appears certain: even if the



PHOTO: RAJIB RAIHAN

middle order continues to misfire, their World Cup spots do not seem in doubt.

Bangladesh's middle-order problems are hardly new; the T20 side has looked shaky in this department for a long time. Even when runs come, they rarely influence match results. The Ireland series did little to change that outlook. Bangladesh did win the series after falling behind, and as often happens, victories tend to mask deeper issues. When results go your way, shortcomings become easier to overlook.

Beating Ireland was fully expected -- even a 3-0 win against a lower-ranked side at home would not have been cause for excessive celebration. What mattered more

was whether the gaps were addressed. For now, the team seems reluctant to confront that question.

In this series, Jaker Ali struggled in the first match and was dropped for Nurul Hasan Sohan, who performed even worse in the second game and was then omitted for the decider. Litton, however, is not overly worried: "No, brother, I'm not very concerned. I've said before -- not every department or every player will perform well every time. And look at [Tawhid] Hridoy -- he had been struggling for a big score for a while, but in this series he got one. It means every player is capable of scoring big. They just need some time."

Litton referred to Hridoy's 83 off 50 balls in the first T20I -- although most of those runs came after Bangladesh were already headed toward defeat.

Shamim Hossain, who returned for the final T20I after controversy surrounding his exclusion earlier, did not get a chance to bat. Mahidul Islam Ankon, included in the squad with hopes of testing him in one match -- preferably after Bangladesh had sealed the series -- ended up only posing with the trophy.

Ironically, Litton later said he "never really thought about trying someone new there [in the middle order]," raising questions about Ankon's selection in the first place.

Litton suggested extraordinary performances in the upcoming Bangladesh Premier League could "open doors" for players, but also noted that "you can't drop someone who's performing."

Other than Hridoy's knock in a losing cause, the middle order rarely looked settled, leaving plenty of doubts in the batting order. Gains made in bilateral series have repeatedly overshadowed the inconsistencies and fragility of the Tigers, who seem to focus more on the "winning momentum".

Going into the World Cup with a settled squad is undoubtedly positive. But if performance gaps persist, that stability could quickly become a drawback.

ALLEGATIONS OF MISCONDUCT BCB extends deadline for Jahanara inquiry

SPORTS REPORTER

The Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) on Tuesday extended the deadline for submitting a report by the five-member committee tasked with investigating allegations made by former women's captain Jahanara Alam, pushing it to December 20.

Jahanara was issued a letter by the BCB on November 16, asking her to submit a formal written complaint along with any documentary or digital evidence within five working days. The board said the complainant had requested a little more time, which was granted.

"They [the investigation committee] cannot advise or proceed with the matter until they receive more detailed and proper information from her," BCB CEO Nizamuddin Chowdhury told The Daily Star on Tuesday.

Nizamuddin, however, said he was unsure whether the complainant -- currently abroad -- would submit her statement physically or virtually.

The BCB initially formed a three-member inquiry committee after allegations of misconduct involving individuals associated with the women's team surfaced in the media, and later added two legal experts to the panel. The committee was originally instructed to submit its findings and recommendations within 15 working days.



Bangladesh go down fighting against France

SPORTS REPORTER

The Bangladesh U-21 hockey team produced another brave display at the FIH Hockey Men's Junior World Cup but suffered a narrow 3-2 defeat to reigning runners-up France in their final Pool F match at the Mayor Radhakrishnan Hockey Stadium in Chennai yesterday.

Buoyed by a spirited 3-3 comeback draw against South Korea and a competitive 5-3 loss to former champions Australia, Bangladesh took the field with confidence and made France work hard despite the Europeans entering the match after big wins -- 11-1 against Korea and 8-3 against Australia.

France opened the scoring in the seventh minute through a penalty stroke converted by Tom Gaillard. Mohammad Abdullah levelled for Bangladesh in the 28th minute with a well-taken field goal.

France regained control in the third quarter, scoring twice within six minutes through Gabin Lorrzurri and James Liddiard. However, Bangladesh refused to fold. Penalty corner specialist Amirul Islam struck in the 55th minute to narrow the margin, converting the team's third short corner and his seventh goal of the competition.

Assistant coach Ashiquzzaman said the team focused on counter-attacking after keeping their defence compact but rued missed chances. "The margin could have been different had the boys capitalised on their opportunities. A penalty stroke given to us went France's way after a long review. The boys kept pushing until the last whistle," he said.

Bangladesh will now move to the 17th-24th classification round after completion of all group matches.

Saqlain's path to BPL not only paved by tape-tennis

Uncapped pace-bowling all-rounder **Abdul Gaffar Saqlain** emerged as one of the biggest surprises of the 12th Bangladesh Premier League (BPL) auction, with Rajshahi Warriors snapping him up for Tk 44 lakh -- far above his Tk 14 lakh base price. The 27-year-old, who bypassed traditional age-level pathways, recently gained attention with a strong showing at the Rising Stars Asia Cup in Qatar. In an interview with *The Daily Star's* Samsul Arefin Khan, Saqlain discussed his unconventional cricketing journey and development into a multi-format player after starting in tape-tennis cricket. The following are excerpts:

The Daily Star (DS): How excited are you to be picked for the BPL for the first time?

Abdul Gaffar Saqlain (AGS): For any new player, getting a chance in such a big tournament feels amazing.

DS: How did your family react?

AGS: I was outside when the auction started. When I returned, it was already underway. My mother, younger brother, and aunts were watching from home. My brother became very excited when my name came up, and my mother -- who was reciting the Quran after Maghrib as usual -- was very happy when Rajshahi picked me.

DS: After strong performances in the Rising Stars Asia Cup and domestic cricket, how confident were you about getting a BPL team?

AGS: Wherever I play, I just try to give my best. I managed to do that this year -- but ultimately, Allah made it happen.

DS: You didn't come through traditional age-group cricket. What was your journey like?

AGS: I never played U-16, U-17, U-18, or U-19. I started playing in my locality. An elder brother once told me I had talent and should try cricket-ball cricket. At Saidpur, I performed well in a tournament at the Railway Ground, then played a



year in Third Division. I spent two years at Gazi Tyres, moved to Kakrail Boys in First Division, then returned to Gazi Tyres. We earned promotion to First Division and became champions to qualify for the Premier League. That same year, I was called up for the National League -- even before my premier league debut. My first premier

league wicket was Tamim Iqbal, which I'll never forget.

DS: Many say the HP Programme changed your career. What did that opportunity mean?

AGS: I always wanted to attend a camp, so getting into the HP camp made me extremely happy. HP helps with screening, fitness, mentality, strength, and discipline. I loved the environment and tried to learn as much as possible.

DS: You have a long history in tape-tennis cricket. How did it shape your journey?

AGS: People think I reached the BPL only because of tape-tennis, but that's not true. I played tape-tennis, but also club cricket. I played two years each in Third and Second Division, and seven to eight years in club cricket overall. Before league season, I would stop tape-tennis and prepare for two months. My performances in club cricket earned me promotions throughout my career.

DS: After playing abroad in the Rising Stars Asia Cup and now getting a BPL call-up, what's your vision?

AGS: Like any player, I dream of representing my country. I want to serve Bangladesh for a long time, and I pray that Allah helps me achieve that.



Narrow defeat despite MARIA'S WONDER STRIKE

Bangladesh players leave the pitch dejected following a narrow 2-1 defeat against Azerbaijan in the last match of the Infix Tri-Nation Tournament at the National Stadium in Dhaka yesterday. The women in red put up a much improved performance compared to their 1-0 defeat against Malaysia, fighting back from a goal down through a superlative volley from Maria Manda in the first half. However, the European side, ranked 30 places above Bangladesh, struck again late, eventually sealing victory and clinching the title of the three-nation tournament.

PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED

SHORT CORNER

Amite's 213 drives Sylhet, Chattogram thump Rangpur



Amite Hasan drove Sylhet to a massive total with a career-best 213 in Sylhet on the third day of the sixth round of the National Cricket League match against Rajshahi. Sylhet declared at 535 for 8, while Rajshahi fought back in their second

innings and ended the day at 146 for 3, trailing by 153 runs. Meanwhile, Chattogram defeated table-toppers Rangpur by an innings and 43 runs in Cox's Bazar.

Mohammedan salvage draw, Police snatch narrow win

Mohammedan came from behind to secure a 1-1 draw against Fortis FC, while Bangladesh Police edged Arambagh KS 1-0 in the Federation Cup Group B matches yesterday. With two matches played, Mohammedan top the table with four points, and Police sit second with three points.

Former England batter Robin Smith dies aged 62

Former England batter Robin Smith died at the age of 62, English county side Hampshire announced on Tuesday. Smith, who played 62 Tests between 1988 and 1996, died unexpectedly on Monday in Australia.

44 clubs stand firm, vow to continue boycott

Forty-four clubs have reaffirmed their stance to continue protests against the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB), alleging irregularities in the recent board elections, and will maintain their boycott of domestic leagues. Despite BCB president Aminul Islam Bulbul's announcement that the First Division League would begin on December 11, the clubs have refused to withdraw their boycott decision.

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

ATTENTION!

PS Group has no presence, partners, projects or recruitment in Bangladesh.

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Stay safe. Protect your money. Do not fall prey to such scams.

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Imran Khan 'perfectly fine'

Says his sister after meeting the PTI founder in jail

DAWN ONLINE

Pakistan's former prime minister and PTI founder Imran Khan's sister Uzma Khanum yesterday said that her brother was "perfectly fine" after a meeting with him at Rawalpindi's Adiala jail.



Prison authorities had allowed her to meet the incarcerated former prime minister. She was accompanied by scores of PTI supporters who gathered outside the jail as Uzma went inside the prison to meet her brother.

In a short talk with the media after the meeting, she said: "Imran Khan's health is perfectly fine. However, he was very angry and said that they are subjecting him to mental torture."

She said her brother was kept in his room throughout the day, with only a little time to go outside, and there was no communication with anyone.

SEE PAGE 8 COL 1



Smoke billows as Israeli forces demolish the house of Abdul Karim Snobar, detained earlier this year on accusations of plotting bus bombings, in the occupied West Bank city of Nablus yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP

527 OCs posted through lottery

110 metropolitan police stations yet to get new chiefs

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government has appointed or transferred 527 police officials as officers-in-charge across the country through a lottery, a major reshuffle aimed at ensuring stability during the national election.

The lottery was conducted at the home ministry in the presence of Home Affairs Adviser Lt Gen (ret'd) Jahangir Alam Chowdhury yesterday, AHM Shahadat Hossain, additional inspector general (media and public relations) of the Police Headquarters, told The Daily Star.

Earlier, the PHQ had sought "honest and impartial" inspectors and prepared a list, from which the new OCs were selected. The list also included the existing OCs.

According to police sources, Bangladesh has 639 police stations - 527 in districts and 110 in metropolitan areas. Of the district-level postings, 98 OCs have been assigned in Dhaka Range, 111 in Chattogram, 64 in Khulna, 36 in Mymensingh, 46 in Barishal, 39 in Sylhet, 71 in Rajshahi, and 62 in Rangpur.

The list of newly appointed OCs has been sent to the range offices for implementation, AIG Shahadat said, adding that postings in 110 metropolitan police stations are yet to be decided.

On November 26, the government appointed or transferred police superintendents of all 64 districts through a lottery. At least 33 additional deputy inspector generals were promoted to DIG, and Rajshahi Metropolitan Police received a new commissioner.

French pastry chefs auction chocolate sculptures

AFP, Paris

Chocolate artworks by some of France's most famous pastry chefs sold at auction Monday for more than 100,000 euros in a charity event that had bidders smacking their lips.

The Paris auction, organised by the pastry chef Pierre Herme, featured such whimsical creations as a chocolate clock, a bouquet of white chocolate roses and a monumental piece made of 495 chocolate eggs - plus one of ritzy Daum crystal.

The event raised 108,100 euros (\$125,500) for a charity that helps children hospitalised with leukaemia, according to auction house Artcurial.

It called the auction the first of its kind worldwide. "This is truly a first," auctioneer Arnaud Oliveux told AFP.

The auction featured works by 25 celebrated pastry chefs, including Herme, Patrick Roger, Cyril Lignac, and Nina Metayer. Many of the chefs paired their creations with one-of-a-kind experiences.

Herme's chocolate and crystal egg masterpiece, for example, came with a private lesson from the chef on making macarons, while a two-metre (six-foot-seven-inch) sculpture by Roger came with a tasting session with the master "chocolatier".

The auction house did not release the selling price for individual items.

The pieces are all edible, though the chefs created them to be displayed, said Herme.

"When you set your eyes on them, you don't feel like touching them because they're so visually magnificent," said Oliveux, calling top-level pastry creation "a kind of culinary art".



Healthcare workers' demo disrupts vaccination, medical services

TUHIN SHUBHRA ADHIKARY

Health services and vaccination programmes are facing disruption as several sections of medical professionals continue their demonstrations to press home their separate demands.

Government nurses, medical technologists, pharmacists, and health assistants have been holding separate programmes and demonstrations for the last two weeks and have threatened to intensify them, indicating further disruption in healthcare services.

Vaccination of children across the country came to a near halt as several thousand health assistants began a sit-in at the Central Shaheed Minar on Saturday to realise their demands.

The demonstrators said they have long been making their demands and were forced to take to the streets as the authorities did not pay heed to them.

ABM Abu Hanif, director (administration) of Director General of Health Services (DGHS), however, said they were in favour of most of the demands, and the implementation of many of them is already underway.

But the agitating health workers are not willing to allow the time needed; instead, they have been demonstrating in violation of their service rules and causing suffering to the service seekers.

"The health ministry is working to resolve the issues," he told The Daily Star yesterday.

Health assistants are frontline public health workers, especially in rural and hard-to-reach areas. They conduct routine

correspondent.

Replying to a question, he said they would arrange extra sessions, once the health assistants withdraw their demonstration, to make up for the losses caused by the protest.

Several thousand health assistants took position in front of the DGHS office around 9:00am yesterday as they saw no progress on their demands.

Several mid-level officials from DGHS asked them to hold talks, but they refused and said they would only sit with the health adviser, said Fazlul Haque Chowdhury, member secretary of the Bangladesh Health Assistant Association Central Coordination Council.

The association has long been demanding amendments to the recruitment rules, upgrading their entry post to grade-14 instead of grade-16, removal of salary discrimination, and the granting of technical status, among their six-point demand.

On November 23, the organisation announced that it would go for work abstention if its demands were not met by November 28.

As per the previous announcement, two other key professional groups in public health services - medical technologists and pharmacists - are supposed to enforce a four-hour (8:00am to 12:00pm) work abstention today.

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Government nurses, medical technologists, pharmacists, and health assistants have been holding separate programmes and demonstrations for the last two weeks and have threatened to intensify them, indicating further disruption in healthcare services.

vaccination sessions and register newborn children, among other responsibilities.

All the activities have been suspended since the health assistants began the strike on Saturday, Hasanul Mahmud, assistant director of the Expanded Programme on Immunisation under the DGHS, told this

Israeli forces raze Gaza buildings

Raid occupied West Bank; Trump warns Israel not to 'interfere' in Syria

AGENCIES

Israeli forces yesterday carried out demolition and destruction on residential buildings behind the so-called yellow line in the eastern areas of Gaza City.

At least one person was killed in the Bureij refugee camp in central Gaza after Israeli army vehicles reportedly opened fire in the camp's eastern area.

Israeli fire kills one in the Bureij refugee camp

2 Palestinians killed by Israeli fire in West Bank's Hebron

Qatar hopes to push Hamas, Israel to next talks phase

The Wafa news agency also reported explosions in the vicinity of the Shujayea intersection in east of Gaza City and in the Tuffah neighbourhood.

The Israeli military said yesterday it had killed two assailants it said attacked soldiers in separate incidents in the occupied West Bank, with the Palestinian Authority identifying the deceased as a 17 and 18-year-old.

Artillery shelling and heavy gunfire from Israeli helicopters were also heard inside the yellow line east of Khan Younis city, reports Al Jazeera online.

Gaza talks mediator Qatar said yesterday it hoped Israel and Hamas could be brought to a new phase of negotiations for a peace deal in the Palestinian territory following their October ceasefire agreement.

In a separate development, US President Donald Trump

SEE PAGE 8 COL 1



Date palm sap collectors, known as "gachhis", process freshly collected date juice into molasses in earthen pots near Kushtia's bypass road yesterday. With winter setting in, production of the seasonal delicacy has begun in the district, as demand surges across the country at this time.

PHOTO: ANIS MONDOL



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আসন্ন পবিত্র রমজান ও ঈদ-উল-ফিতর উপলক্ষে ভোক্তা স্বার্থ সুরক্ষা এবং পণ্যের মূল্য ও গুণগত মানের স্বচ্ছতা রক্ষার্থে আমদানি পণ্য বিশেষ করে পোশাক বিক্রেতাদের জন্য নিম্নলিখিত নির্দেশনা অবশ্যপালনীয়ঃ

- সকল আমদানিকৃত পণ্য, বিশেষ করে পোশাকের গায়ে সর্বোচ্চ খুচরা মূল্য (MRP) স্পষ্টভাবে মুদ্রিত এবং যে দেশ থেকে আমদানি করা হয়েছে তা উল্লেখপূর্বক ট্যাগ/লেবেল সংযুক্ত করতে হবে, যা সহজে দৃশ্যমান হয়।
- সংশ্লিষ্ট পণ্যের আমদানি সংক্রান্ত দলিলাদি বিক্রয়স্থল, দোকান বা শোরুমে সংরক্ষণ করতে হবে যাতে জাতীয় ভোক্তা অধিকার সংরক্ষণ অধিদপ্তর বা অন্য কোন সরকারি কর্মকর্তা কর্তৃক পরিদর্শনের সময় তা যাচাই করা যায়।
- বাণিজ্য মন্ত্রণালয়, জাতীয় ভোক্তা অধিকার সংরক্ষণ অধিদপ্তর, জেলা বিশেষ টাস্ক ফোর্স ও সরকার কর্তৃক নিযুক্ত অন্য কোন কর্মকর্তা রাজধানীসহ সারাদেশে বিশেষ তদারকি কার্যক্রম পরিচালনা ও উপরি-বর্ণিত তথ্য যাচাই করবে এবং এই নির্দেশনা লঙ্ঘনকারী ব্যক্তি ও প্রতিষ্ঠানের বিরুদ্ধে পণ্য বাজেয়াপ্তসহ প্রয়োজনীয় আইনানুগ ব্যবস্থা গ্রহণ করবে।

GD-2625

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