



Brazen killings stoke fear ahead of polls

Over 10 people murdered every day on average during the last 15 months

MUNTAKIM SAAD

A spate of killings, especially some targeted ones involving the use of firearms at crowded places in broad daylight, has stirred fresh concerns about the state of law and order as the country prepares for the national election.

Although Home Adviser Lt Gen (retd) Jahangir Alam Chowdhury insists there is "no risk" of deterioration before the February polls, crime analysts believe the election itself is one of the factors behind the disturbing trend.

Illegal firearms, weak policing, and reactivation of top criminals released after last year's political changeover are mainly driving the killings, the analysts said.

A CGS analysis shows a 30 percent rise in firearms-related offences, with over 150 incidents reported every month on an average until June. Compounding the crisis, more than 1,300 firearms looted from police stations during the July uprising remain missing.

They added that political rivalries, factional feuds, turf wars, and the use of gangs to assert influence ahead of the election are further fuelling targeted attacks and armed violence nationwide.

With the election schedule expected next week, candidates of major political parties have already begun campaigning informally. Violent protests and clashes over the parties' choices have also been reported. Confrontations between activists of rival parties have occurred at some places.

Against this backdrop, a series of shocking attacks and killings in Dhaka, Chattogram, Khulna and elsewhere, has raised questions about public safety.

In one of these incidents, the assailants even shot and injured a rickshaw-puller for refusing to speed up as the attackers were fleeing after gunning down local Jubo Dal leader Golam Kibria in the capital's Pallabi area on November 17. A CCTV footage of the attackers firing at

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BNP Standing Committee member and Khaleda Zia's personal physician AZM Zahid Hossain briefing Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus, seated directly opposite him, on the health status of the BNP chairperson at Evercare Hospital in the capital last evening.

PHOTO: CA PRESS WING

Yunus visits Khaleda at hospital

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Chief Adviser Muhammad Yunus yesterday visited Evercare Hospital to enquire about the health of BNP Chairperson and former prime minister Khaleda Zia.

He was received by BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir, Khaleda's personal physician and BNP Standing Committee Member AZM Zahid Hossain,

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Khaleda's condition unchanged

UK specialist starts work, Chinese team reaches Dhaka

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia's health condition remains unchanged, and a specialist from the United Kingdom is assisting in her treatment.

Doctor Richard Beale, who landed yesterday, reviewed her latest medical reports, consulted with the medical board formed for her treatment and made recommendations on the next course of action.



Around 9:00pm yesterday, a specialist medical team from China also arrived in Dhaka.

The four-member team includes senior specialists -- Cai Jianfang, Yuan Xin, Zhang Yuhui, and Meng Hong -- according to party sources.

The team has been brought in to assist in the treatment of Khaleda.

Medical board sources said the foreign experts would determine whether she is fit to fly.

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PRIMARY SCHOOLS Exams disrupted as teachers declare full shutdown

Govt warns of legal action

STAR REPORT

The ongoing strike by assistant teachers in government primary schools has severely disrupted annual exams across the country, leaving thousands of students uncertain about their academic future.

While some schools managed to hold exams with support from headteachers, office staff, and guardians, many others were forced to suspend them.

The strike, which began on Monday as a work stoppage, escalated into a full shutdown yesterday, as teachers pushed for better pay and promotions.

Amid the disruptions, the Ministry of Primary and Mass Education issued a press release warning that teachers who continue to obstruct the exam process will face legal action under government service laws, conduct regulations, and criminal law.

The impact of the strike has been particularly severe in Noakhali and Lakshmipur, where 1,985 primary schools have been affected. Only a few schools have managed to conduct exams, relying on headteachers and guardians.

During a visit to Noakhali Police Lines Government Primary School, our district correspondent found students playing outside as teachers joined the strike.

Senior Assistant Teacher Mallika Begum said that while some exams were conducted with help from the night guard, tests for classes three, four, and five had to be postponed.

At Lakshminarayanpur Model Government Primary School, fifth-grader Jannatul Ferdous said, "I came to school prepared for the exam, but I found out the teachers wouldn't be conducting it. So, I'm going to go home."

A guardian named Laxmi Nari, 30, said, "I have invested the whole year

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সিমেন্ট



লোহার শক্তি



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Newly formed Editors' Council committee holds first meeting

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The newly elected executive committee of the Editors' Council has held its first meeting at The Daily Star Centre in the capital.

Nurul Kabir, editor of the New Age, formally assumed the role of president of the council at the meeting on Tuesday, the council said in a press release yesterday.

During the meeting, the council's outgoing president Mahfuz Anam, editor and publisher of The Daily Star, was honoured by the executive committee members with a crest in recognition of his bold leadership and effective role in the council.

The meeting was attended by Matiur Rahman, editor of the Prothom Alo; Matiur Rahman Chowdhury, editor of the Manab Zamin; Shamsul Haq Zahid, editor of The Financial Express; Tasmina Hossain, editor of The Daily Ittefaq; Dewan Hanif Mahmud, editor of the Bonik Barta; AMM Bahauddin, editor of The Daily Inqilab; and Rusko Mahmud, editor of the Suprobhat Bangladesh. Md Mozammel Haque, editor of Karatua, joined the meeting virtually.

At November 13 meeting, the council elected its new executive committee for a 2-year term, with Kabir as president and Hanif Mahmud as general secretary.



Mahfuz Anam, editor and publisher of The Daily Star and outgoing president of the Editors' Council, was honoured by the members of the Editors' Council executive committee with a crest in recognition of his bold leadership and effective role in the council during the first meeting of the newly elected committee at The Daily Star Centre on Tuesday.

PHOTO: EDITORS' COUNCIL

Woman sent to jail for killing 8 puppies

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Pabna

A Pabna court yesterday sent a woman to jail over the killing of eight puppies in Ishwardi upazila on Monday.

The accused is Nishi Rahman, wife of Hasnur Rahman Nayon, an official of the upazila office of the government's Small Farmers Development Foundation.

Earlier on Tuesday night, Nishi was arrested from a residence in Ishwardi municipal area.

The case was filed by the upazila Livestock Officer Aklima Khatun under Section 7 of the Animal Welfare Act, 2019, which prohibits the killing or forcible relocation of stray animals and requires them to be vaccinated and sterilised instead.

Additional Superintendent of Police (Ishwardi Circle) Pranab Kumar confirmed the filing of the case.

Nishi is accused of drowning eight newborn puppies in a pond on the premises of Ishwardi Upazila Parishad on Monday -- an incident that went viral on social and mainstream media and sparked nationwide outrage.

She was produced before the Senior Judicial Magistrate Court-1 yesterday afternoon.

After a hearing, Senior Judicial Magistrate Torikul Islam sent her to jail, said Rafikul Islam, general recording officer of Pabna Court Police.

Earlier, the accused and her family left their government residence after they were directed to vacate the house over the allegation.

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Khaleda's condition unchanged

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The former prime minister remained under close observation at Evercare Hospital in the capital.

Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus visited Evercare Hospital last night to enquire about Khaleda's health. He stayed there for nearly 30 minutes.

Khaleda's personal doctor, AZM Zahid Hossain, at 3:00pm stated that her condition remained the same.

BNP Standing Committee member Zahid requested everyone to keep praying for Khaleda's swift recovery.

The BNP chief was admitted to the hospital on November 23 on the advice of her medical board after being diagnosed with infections affecting her heart and lungs.

The 80-year-old veteran politician is also suffering from pneumonia and is currently receiving treatment in the hospital's Coronary Care Unit.

Meanwhile, advisers Lt Gen (retd) Jahangir Alam Chowdhury and Farida Akhter, Chinese Ambassador Yao Wen, and BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir and other party leaders visited the hospital.

Sharmila Rahman Sithi, wife of Khaleda's late son Arafat Rahman

Koko, also visited the hospital.

Following a visit to the hospital, Syed Mohammad Faizul Karim, senior Nayeb e-Amir of Islami Andolan Bangladesh, said, "We have enquired from those who are responsible. It is the same as before ... They have not been able to inform me of any significant changes."

SECURITY, CROWD

Two platoons of Border Guard Bangladesh were deployed in front of the hospital yesterday morning.

One platoon has been stationed at the main hospital gate, while the other is patrolling the surrounding area.

Police set up a barricade in front of the hospital and took positions at the main gate. Members of the Special Security Force (SSF) were present inside the hospital.

Despite party instructions not to crowd, party leaders and activists gathered outside the hospital.

They began arriving at the hospital gate in the morning, in small groups, and stood near the gate.

BNP leader Didar Hossain from Gazipur said, "We understand the party's instructions, but we wanted to be here to show our support for

Madam [Khaleda]. We are praying for her recovery."

Jubo Dal leader Akash Hossain from Dhanmondi said, "Our concern for Khaleda Zia's health has brought us here. We hope for her swift recovery and return to lead the party."

Party activist Dulal Hossain said, "It's hard to stay away when our leader is unwell."

PRAYERS

At different parts of the country, special prayers were offered for Khaleda's quick recovery.

Speaking at a prayer event in Nayapalton, BNP Standing Committee member Abdul Moyeen Khan has said that despite being a national leader, Khaleda built her political legacy on the streets alongside millions of supporters, not from any position of comfort or privilege.

"Khaleda Zia never practised palace politics. She walked the streets with her people," UNB quoted him as saying.

At a separate prayer event, BNP Senior Joint Secretary General Ruhul Kabir Rizvi alleged that Khaleda's deteriorating health was largely the result of actions taken by ousted prime minister Sheikh Hasina.

Brazen killings stoke fear ahead of polls

FROM PAGE 1

Kibria multiple times inside a shop went viral on social media, sending a shockwave across the nation.

This week, two men linked to a criminal gang were gunned down outside the Khulna Metropolitan Sessions Judge's Court. Days earlier, listed top criminal Tariq Saif Mamun was shot dead near Dhaka's busiest court area, and earlier last month, Chattogram's underworld figure Sarwar Hossain Babla was killed during a voter outreach event.

Law enforcement has struggled to regain footing since the fall of the Awami League government.

Human Rights Support Society (HRSS) reports at least 120 deaths in political violence between January and November. In November alone, it recorded 96 violent political incidents that left 12 people dead and around 874 injured, compared to October's 64 incidents, 10 deaths, and 513 injuries.

The organisation notes sharp rises in intra- and inter-party clashes, turf battles, extortion, intimidation, and disputes linked to nominations for the 13th national election.

Police Headquarters data also paints a grim picture. Over the past 15 months, at least 4,809 murder cases were filed nationwide, including 3,236 in the first 10 months of 2025, up from 3,029 in the same period in 2024 and 2,563 in 2023.

In the 15-month period, Dhaka Metropolitan Police registered 551 murder cases. Many of these were tied to incidents from the August 5 changeover or earlier but filed only recently.

Data gathered by the Centre for Governance Studies (CGS) showed that the monthly average of murder cases fell to 322 in the first half of 2025, from 343 in the same period last year, though still far higher than the averages of 252 in 2023, 260 in 2022, and 268 in 2021.

Police Headquarters data shows on an average 325 murder cases were filed every month from July to October this year, compared to 261 in 2023. Last year's average, however, spiked to 374 due to killings during the uprising. In August 2024 alone, 626 murder cases were filed. Cases over some of the murders that occurred during that period were also filed in 2025.

Adviser Jahangir on November 23 said there is "no risk" of law-and-order deterioration ahead of

the national election, adding that the overall security environment is steadily improving.

"As the election approaches, the number of rallies and processions by different political parties will naturally increase. When we assumed office, the situation had already begun to deteriorate. Over the past year and a half, our efforts have helped bring significant improvements," he said.

RISING GUN VIOLENCE

A CGS analysis shows a 30 per cent rise in firearms-related offences, with over 150 incidents reported every month on an average until June.

Compounding the crisis, more than 1,300 firearms looted from police stations during the July uprising remain missing, many believed to be fuelling the recent surge in violent crime.

Although the government has announced rewards for information regarding the stolen arms, progress has been minimal.

Gun violence was shocking in November.

On November 30 in Khulna, Fazle Rabbi Rajon, 35, and Hasib Hawlader, 31, were shot dead outside the Metropolitan Sessions Judge's Court.

On November 2, Tuhin Dewan, 22, was shot dead in Munshiganj amid a feud between two BNP groups. Arif Mir, 35, was killed eight days later in a clash linked to the same dispute, while injured Raihan Khan, 22, died on November 11.

That same day in Khulna's Arongghata, teacher Imdadul Haque, 55, was shot dead near the BNP office.

On November 15 in Lakshmipur, ward BNP general secretary Abul Kalam was hacked and shot dead, with his wife accusing a Chhatra Dal activist.

On November 27 in Brahmanbaria, former Chhatra Dal leader Saddam Hossain, 35, was taken from his home at midnight and shot dead.

On November 5 in Chattogram, a known criminal Sarwar Hossain Babla, 43, was killed during a shooting at a campaign event for BNP's candidate hopeful Ershad Ullah. Police in the port city linked Babla's murder to clashes between rival factions vying for territorial control.

On November 13 in Chattogram's Rangunia, Shramik Dal leader Abdul Mannan was shot dead.

On November 17 in Dhaka's Mirpur, assailants entered a shop and shot dead Golam Kibria, 47, member

secretary of Pallabi Thana Jubo Dal.

The violence followed multiple killings tied to political or local rivalries reported across the country in October, many involving firearms.

Just as December began, an auto-rickshaw driver, Pappu Sheikh, 26, was shot dead in Dhaka's Jurain area, reportedly over previous enmity.

Speaking to this newspaper recently, criminologist Omar Faruk said every citizen "is now living with a sense of insecurity".

With the election nearing, tensions will likely deepen as political groups may deploy released underworld criminals to display strength, conduct armed shows of force, and intimidate rivals, said Faruk, professor of criminology and police science at Mawlana Bhashani Science and Technology University.

He urged the government and police to re-arrest identified criminals and recover illegal firearms through focused operations.

"Otherwise, the upcoming election is unlikely to be peaceful or fair, and incidents of killing and violent crime may rise sharply," he warned.

Security analyst Maj Gen (retd) ANM Muniruzzaman, president of the Bangladesh Institute of Peace and Security Studies, echoed the concern, saying that police presence and effectiveness remain below expectations.

"The political leadership at the home ministry, along with senior police officers, must take the necessary steps to boost the force's morale so that they can operate more effectively and efficiently," he said.

Contacted last night, Bangladesh Police spokesperson AHM Sahadat Hossain told The Daily Star that ahead of the election, police are working with more confidence than they had in the months after the July uprising.

About preventing targeted killings, he cited difficulty in anticipating such incidents.

"What we often observe is that political rivalries and personal grudges operate at an individual or group level. And at that level, it is difficult to detect or prevent such incidents," he said.

"But we act when there are some signs. For example, when a criminal is released from jail, we place them under watch through our intelligence units. If something occurs, police can step in early or take immediate legal action," he said.

Exams disrupted as teachers declare full shutdown

FROM PAGE 1

in private tuition for my child, only to have the exams disrupted by the strike. It's shameful to hold students' futures hostage to fulfil demands."

In Jhenidah, only 446 of 908 schools conducted exams, confirmed Md Amjad Hossain, assistant primary education officer.

Meanwhile, 479 of 805 primary schools in Kushtia held exams.

District Primary Education Officer Mofizul Islam said exams were conducted in schools with headteachers present. However, 326 schools had to suspend assessments.

Saidul Islam, acting headteacher of Swastipur Government Primary School, said, "Once our demands are met, we'll hold the exams on time."

In Rajshahi, exams proceeded in most schools with the help of headteachers, office staffers, and guardians.

Md Ashraful Islam, assistant primary education officer in the district, said that after some initial disruptions, exams were conducted smoothly.

However, several teachers, including Farjana Rahman of Railway Government Primary School, expressed frustration over conducting exams with little workforce. "Our demands are legitimate, and the government should resolve these issues quickly."

In Sylhet, all 5,054 primary schools held exams, with support from assistant teachers and other staffers.

Similarly, in Tangail, all 1,623 primary schools conducted exams with support from local communities, confirmed District Primary Education

Officer Md Sahab Uddin.

In Mymensingh, 1,840 of 2,140 primary schools held exams with guardians' help. Md Obaidullah, district primary education officer, said headteachers of those schools coordinated with guardians to ensure exams continued.

In Gaibandha, all 1,463 primary schools held exams with support from local authorities. District Primary Education Officer Lakshman Kumar Das said exams proceeded smoothly with help from the upazila nirbahi officer and assistant commissioner (Land).

In Bogura, exams were held in all 1,603 primary schools.

Md Rezwan Hossain, district primary officer, said, "Local communities stepped in to ensure exams went ahead. However, in Dupchanchia Model Primary School, guardians reacted aggressively when teachers refused to take the exams. The situation was later resolved through discussions."

Guardian Masud Parvez, whose child is a fifth-grader, said, "The children are not able to sit for their exams properly, which is harming them. The government should quickly resolve this issue, or the students will suffer long-term effects."

In Kishoreganj, 390 of 1,327 primary schools could not hold exams. District Primary Education Officer Mojib Alam said officials and guardians helped maintain the schedule in the other schools, though parents expressed anger over the disruptions.

In Chattogram, Narayanganj, and Munshiganj, all primary schools held exams as scheduled.

MINISTRY'S WARNING

In its warning issued yesterday, the primary and mass education ministry urged striking teachers to resume duties immediately and ensure timely completion of exams.

While acknowledging teachers' concerns, it stressed that disruptions to students' education are unacceptable.

The statement further said that despite measures taken, several teachers' organisations have continued to disrupt exams. "In some cases, teachers willing to conduct exams have been physically assaulted. Such actions, which jeopardise students' education, are in violation of government service laws, conduct regulations, and criminal law."

Meanwhile, leaders of the protesting teachers last night declared that the ongoing "complete shutdown" across the country will continue indefinitely until their demands are met.

The announcement came in a joint press release issued by the Prathomik Shikkhok Dabi Bastobayon Parishad and the Bangladesh Prathomik Sahakari Shikkhok Sangathan Oikya Parishad.

The teachers' 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 per cent departmental promotion to headteacher posts.

Teachers' current salaries start at Grade 13. There are over 65,000 government primary schools, with more than 1 crore students.

the UK, China and other countries.

Yunus, who has been regularly monitoring the updates on Khaleda's health condition, reiterated the government's assurance of providing all necessary support.

He stayed at the hospital for about half an hour. National Security Adviser Khalilur Rahman accompanied him during the hospital visit.

The BNP chief was admitted to Evercare on November 23 after being diagnosed with infections in her heart and lungs. Her condition deteriorated on November 27, after which she was shifted to the CCU.

The 80-year-old three-time prime minister has long been battling multiple health complications. She has a pacemaker and has previously undergone stent implants in her heart.

Yunus visits Khaleda at hospital

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head of medical board Shahabuddin Talukder, her younger son's wife Syeda Sharmila Rahman and her younger brother Shamim Eskandar.

Khaleda's medical team briefed Yunus about her condition, stating that her treatment is being conducted under the supervision and assistance of specialist doctors from the US's Mount Sinai and Johns Hopkins as well as from

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TORTURE, DISAPPEARANCES

Prosecution details harrowing accounts in Rab-run cells

ICT rejects accused army officers' plea for virtual appearance

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The prosecution yesterday presented harrowing accounts of enforced disappearances and torture inside Rab-run TFI cells as the International Crimes Tribunal-1 began hearing the charge framing against Sheikh Hasina and 16 others.

Formal charges have been brought against 17 accused, including Hasina, her former defence adviser Maj Gen (ret'd) Tarique Ahmed Siddique, and former home minister Asaduzzaman Khan Kamal. Ten detained army officers were produced in the dock as Chief Prosecutor Tajul Islam read out four charges: ordering, enabling, or failing to prevent enforced disappearances, illegal detention, and torture over an eight-year period.

The tribunal has already appointed three state defence counsels for the seven absconding accused: Hasina, Asaduzzaman, Tareq, three former

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Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus at a photo session during the graduation ceremony of the National Defence Course and Armed Forces War Course 2025 at the National Defence College in Mirpur Cantonment in Dhaka yesterday.

PHOTO: CA'S PRESS WING

DHAKA CENTRAL UNIVERSITY
Protests, counter-protests escalate over ordinance

Students of 7 colleges block road, disrupt traffic

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Students and teachers from the seven affiliated colleges yesterday staged separate demonstrations over the proposed Dhaka Central University ordinance.

A group of students initially blocked the Science Lab intersection from 1:00pm to 1:45pm and later moved to the New Market-Azimpur intersection, where they blocked the road and formed a human chain from 2:00pm to 4:00pm, demanding the immediate issuance of the ordinance.

"Due to the blockade, vehicular movement remained slow for hours and eventually came to a complete standstill for nearly two hours until the students left the road. The situation returned to normal around 5:00pm," said Twaha Yeasin Hossen, assistant commissioner (Traffic) in the New Market area.

Meanwhile, a group of students from Eden Mohila College blocked the Nilkhet intersection from 11:45am to 1:30pm, opposing the proposal, before marching toward Dhaka College, where they staged a sit-in in front of the

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Strengthen survey, analyse data for safety

Experts tell programme on earthquake preparedness

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Timely surveys, data collection, and analysis are crucial for preparing for potential major earthquakes, with Bangladesh sitting on a geologically active zone, said experts at an event yesterday.

Speaking at the Dhaka Reporters' Unity, members of the Bangladesh Geological Survey also emphasised the need for geologists, researchers, planners, engineers, and other professionals to study the country's geological conditions.

This would help evaluate the potential for major earthquakes and develop appropriate preparedness measures and recommended actions, they added.

Termining the recent earthquake a wake-up call, BGS leaders explained that earthquakes measuring 5.0-5.9 on the Richter scale are considered "Damaging Earthquakes," while those measuring 6.0-6.9 are classified as "Destructive Earthquakes".

"The November 21 earthquake was a Damaging Earthquake, with a magnitude close to that of a

Destructive Earthquake. Although precise predictions of earthquake timing and magnitude are not possible, hazard-prone areas can be identified," said Dr Anwar Zahid, general secretary of BGS.

Anwar said as Dhaka and its surrounding areas are densely populated, a major earthquake could cause widespread damage.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Conduct detailed surveys, risk assessments

Update earthquake risk map

Enhance geological survey dept's capabilities

Set up task force for quake monitoring

Increase public awareness, cooperation

He said building owners often prioritise short-term gains during construction, ignoring rules as Rajuk turns a blind eye. After every disaster, experts raise alarms, and the agency vows action. But after some days, the dust settles, and the dangerous cycle continues.

Prof Badrul Imam, president of GSB, emphasised that earthquakes are a natural phenomenon, and occasional tremors are normal in a seismically active region like Bangladesh.

He stressed that instead of fear or exaggeration, the most effective protection lies in data collection, analysis, and proper preparedness.

Experts noted that Bangladesh's geographic, geological, and tectonic position is highly complex, with many considering it to be located at a subduction-related plate boundary.

The subduction of the Indian Plate beneath the Burmese Plate began hundreds of thousands of years ago, resulting in the formation of the hills in Chittagong and Sylhet. The pressure from these two plates is ongoing, putting Bangladesh at risk of earthquakes.

The GSB leaders outlined several key recommendations, including conducting detailed surveys and research to determine potential earthquake magnitude and risk, identifying Bangladesh's

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16 DAYS OF ACTIVISM

Ensuring digital safety a social responsibility

Say experts

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh must confront the rapid rise of digital violence against women and girls, said speakers yesterday.

They cautioned that without stronger safeguards in online spaces and accessible reporting and support systems, women will remain vulnerable to harassment, exploitation, and tech-facilitated abuse, which increasingly leads to offline harm.

The seminar, "16 Days Activism Against Gender-Based Violence 2025," was organised by Ipas Bangladesh with support from the health ministry, UNFPA, and the High Commission of Canada at the DGHS Conference Bhaban in Dhaka.

Dr Sayed Rubayet, country director of Ipas, said, "Violence against women and girls remains one of Bangladesh's most urgent human rights and public health challenges, and we must respond with unity, mindset change and survivor-centred services."

Dr Mohammad Shawket Hossain Khan, director of the Health Economics Unit, said,



- » Ensure national commitment for tackling gender-based violence
- » Prioritise safety, rights of women in online, offline spaces
- » Enhance digital literacy to protect women from online exploitation
- » Provide survivor-centred services, support throughout the year

Cyber violence is only one expression of deeper inequalities. Progress will remain slow if we keep focusing on victims instead of confronting male perpetrators through education, deterrence and stronger legal consequences.

DR HALIDA HANUM AKHTER

"Gender-based violence cannot be tackled in isolation. Eleven ministries are now engaged in strengthening medical, psychosocial and legal responses. No single institution can end violence without coordinated national commitment."

Former Women's Affairs Reform Commission member Dr Halida Hanum Akhter urged structural reform, noting, "Cyber violence is only one expression of deeper inequalities."

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Media freedom crucial for free and fair polls

Say envoys; stress need to end impunity for crimes against journos

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

As Bangladesh approaches a critical election early next year, responsible and independent journalism will be crucial in ensuring a free and fair poll, said two foreign diplomats at a media freedom event yesterday.

They also stressed the need to end impunity for crimes against journalists.

"Journalists will be key and critical to the election, where voters are able to express their franchise in the way democracy should allow it," said Canadian High Commissioner Ajit Singh at a "meet and greet" event with journalists at the Canadian Club.

The event was organised by Media Freedom Coalition, a global partnership of 51 countries dedicated to promoting media freedom and protecting journalists worldwide.

Ajit Singh said nowhere in the world is journalism more challenging than in Bangladesh. He said the challenges have grown in recent times and will become even more difficult in the coming months as Bangladesh approaches one of its biggest elections.

Deputy head of the German embassy, Anja Kersten, said in the lead-up to Bangladesh's national elections, responsible and independent journalism will play

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Labourers work with metal items without any safety gear, occupying a large section of the road in the capital's Dholaikhal area and putting themselves and pedestrians at risk. The situation is made worse by ongoing road development work, which further narrows the space for safe movement. The photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON

Consider health of Khaleda before announcing election date

NCP urges EC; raises concern over level playing field

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The National Citizen Party yesterday urged the Election Commission to consider the illness of BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia and the country's current political situation before announcing the schedule for the upcoming 13th national election, scheduled for next February.

Expressing concern over the "level playing field," NCP leaders said there may be political influence in the appointment of deputy commissioners and superintendents of police across the country ahead of the polls. The party asked the EC to be more cautious about these issues.

NCP leaders conveyed these concerns while speaking to reporters yesterday afternoon after a three-member NCP delegation met the Chief Election Commissioner at the EC headquarters in Dhaka.

The party also received its official certificate from the EC as a registered political party.

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PHOTO: STAR

Resort boom ravages forests on Sonadia Island

MOKAMMEL SHUVO, Cox's Bazar

A spree of resort construction on Sonadia Island under Moheshkhali upazila of Cox's Bazar is causing severe damage to forestland and wildlife.

Locals said several resorts have already been built after clearing Jhau forests along both the eastern and western shores, while another three or four are currently under construction.

Located 12 kilometres from Cox's Bazar city, the island has around 9,000 acres of coastal and mangrove forests. However, the rapid expansion of shrimp farms, illegal occupation, and pollution have long put its environment and biodiversity at risk.

Environmental activists warned that the coastal forest is an ecologically sensitive zone, and its destruction poses a serious threat to the island's biodiversity.

Some local political figures have allegedly been grabbing government land near the beach and constructing the resorts after clearing forest areas. Several names have

circulated on social media, though the accused have denied the allegations.

Residents said Sonadia had only two or three small illegal resorts and a few temporary structures and tents for tourists until last year. But in the last three months, around 10 to 12 new cottage-style resorts have been built along the shoreline.

Jhau forests have been cleared and the wood collected was reportedly used in the construction. At least three more wooden resorts are still being built.

These resorts also rent tents to tourists for overnight stays on the beach. They operate generators and solar panels to keep red and blue lights on throughout the night, which conservationists say disturb birds and sea turtles that come ashore to lay eggs.

Contacted, Md Ayub Ali, deputy ranger of the Gorakghata Range under the Coastal Afforestation Division, Chattogram, said they are aware of the resort construction but do not yet have the exact numbers.

In 2017, Bangladesh Economic Zones Authority received 9,467 acres of the island for an eco-tourism park at a nominal cost of Tk 1,001.

Large-scale tree cutting and shrimp farming followed, causing severe environmental damage and prompting several cases to be filed by the Department of Environment.

The Ministry of Land cancelled BEZA's allocation on May 5 this year, returning the land to the Forest Department.

Ayub Ali said a gazette notification has not yet been issued, and as a result forest officials cannot take legal action against the encroachers.

"The UNO of Moheshkhali has been informed in this regard," he added.

"Construction of numerous resorts, loud noise and bright lighting have been threatening the nesting grounds of sea turtles. The turtle nesting season has already begun, and such activities may prevent turtles from coming to the beach," said Abdul Kaiyum, manager of Nature Conservation Management.

He said around 170 migratory bird species use Sonadia as a flyway, and the island supports about 250 species of fish and 40 species of crabs. This biodiversity now faces imminent danger due to illegal tourism activities, and urgent measures are needed.

Contacted, Moheshkhali UNO Md Hedayet Ullah said four forest guards have been posted at the Sonadia Forest Beat to protect the island's resources.

"Had the authorities been alerted earlier, drives could have been conducted sooner. A joint force operation will soon be launched to remove the illegal structures," he said.



Next polls to set the tone for country's future

Says EC Sanaullah
STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The upcoming election is going to be a "tone-setting" moment for what kind of country and democratic journey people want to see in the future, said Election Commissioner Brig Gen (ret'd) Abul Fazal Md Sanaullah yesterday.

"Bangladesh's electoral system has been severely damaged. We are trying to repair this damaged system and restore it to its proper state," he said while speaking as the chief guest at the inaugural session of a daylong journalist training programme.

"We are also trying to reorganise and restructure

SEE PAGE 9 COL 1

5 more die of dengue, 490 get hospitalised

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

At least five dengue patients died while 490 others were hospitalised in the 24 hours till 8:00am yesterday.

According to the Directorate General of Health Services, of the deaths, two each were reported from Dhaka South City Corporation and Mymensingh division, while one was reported from Dhaka North City Corporation.

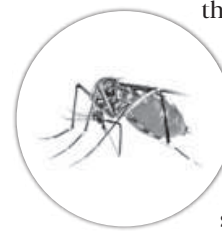
With the new deaths and cases this year, the total number of deaths rose to 391, while total cases stands at 96,067.

Currently, 1,840 dengue patients are undergoing treatment at different hospitals across the country.

Entomologist Prof Kabirul Bashar of Jahangirnagar University said dengue will decrease only slightly in December, with a significant decline unlikely before late January.

"The immediate emergency is that in Dhaka's multistorey buildings, Aedes mosquitoes are breeding in basements. This is not linked to rainfall. These areas must be brought under control immediately," he said.

Entomologist GM Saifur Rahman said, "Only the number of patients will slowly decrease," cautioning that the Culex mosquito population is rising and could cause new public health problems by January or February.



Bangladesh Trade Union Centre brings out a procession in Chattogram's Probartak area yesterday, protesting the government's decision to lease out port terminals to foreign operators.

PHOTO: RAJIB RAIHAN

Bangladesh Shipping Corporation
"BSC Bhaban", Saltgola Road, Chittagong

REF: 18.16.0000.373.02.293.25 Date: 03.12.2025

Invitation of Tender

S.L No.	Tender ID	Name of the tender	Tender opening & closing date & place
1.	COMC-01122025 Dated: 03.12.2025 Ref: 18.16.0000.373.02.293.25	BADC-293/ INTERNATIONAL LIMITED FREIGHT TENDER FOR TRANSPORTATION OF 10TH OT OF 40000 MT (+/- 10%) DAP FERTILIZER IN BULK FROM JORF LASFAR, MOROCCO AND DELIVERY IN 50 KG NET BAG TO TRANSPORT AGENT LOCATED AT CHATTOGRAM AND SHIROMONI GHAT (KHULNA) VIA OUTER ANCHORAGE OF CHATTOGRAM PORT (A/B/C ANCHORAGE), BANGLADESH AND/OR HARBARIA, MONGLA PORT, BANGLADESH AS PACKAGE BASIS (RATIO: CTG & MONGLA: 40%:60%) LAY CAN 17-19 DECEMBER, 2025 A/C BADC. NB: IMMC'S ENLISTED BROKERS ARE ELIGIBLE FOR PARTICIPATING IN THE TENDER.	08-12-2025 11:45am LT & 08-12-2025 11:50am LT at BSC Tower (22nd Floor), Dhaka

General Manager (Chartering)
Phone: 031-728269
E-mail: gm-cht@bsc.gov.bd

GD-2652

LEGAL NOTICE

IN THE SUPREME COURT OF BANGLADESH
HIGH COURT DIVISION
(STATUTORY ORIGINAL JURISDICTION)
COMPANY MATTER NO.2084/2025

An application under section 12 and 13 of the Companies Act 1994

AND

IN THE MATTER OF
Alina Bio Energy Limited, Akij Chamber (7th Floor), 73, Dilkusha C/A, Dhaka. -----Petitioner

-Versus-
Alina Bio Energy Limited, having its address at Akij Chamber (7th Floor), 73, Dilkusha C/A, Dhaka. -----Respondents

Take notice that an application under section 12 and 13 of the Companies Act 1994 was filed before the Hon'ble High Court Division of the Supreme Court of Bangladesh on behalf of the above-named petitioner for amendment of object clause of Memorandum of Association of Alina Bio Energy Limited. Upon hearing the application on 25.11.2025 the Hon'ble Company Judge Mr. Justice Ahmed Sohel was pleased to admit the application. Interested person may appear before the Hon'ble Court on or before the date fixed for hearing of the matter. Copy of the application may be obtained on payment of necessary cost.

Ripan Barai, Advocate
Supreme court of Bangladesh
Eastern Arzoo, 61, Bijoynagar, Dhaka. Cell:01705074227

LEGAL NOTICE

IN THE SUPREME COURT OF BANGLADESH
HIGH COURT DIVISION
(STATUTORY ORIGINAL JURISDICTION)
COMPANY MATTER NO.2084/2025

An application under section 81(2) and 85(3) read with section 396 of the Companies Act 1994

AND

IN THE MATTER OF: Mr. SK. Afil Uddin, Shareholder and Managing Director, Alina Bio Energy Limited, of Akij Chamber (7th Floor), 73, Dilkusha C/A, Dhaka. -----Petitioner

-Versus-
Alina Bio Energy Limited, having its address at Akij Chamber (7th Floor), 73, Dilkusha C/A, Dhaka. -----Respondents

Take notice that an application under section 81(2) and 85(3) read with section 396 of the Companies Act 1994 was filed before the Hon'ble High Court Division of the Supreme Court of Bangladesh on behalf of the above-named petitioner for condonation of delay in holding Annual General Meeting of Alina Bio Energy Limited for the calendar year 2021, 2022, 2023 & 2024 and to give necessary direction for holding the said Annual General Meetings. Upon hearing the application on 25.11.2025 the Hon'ble Company Judge Mr. Justice Ahmed Sohel was pleased to admit the application. Interested person may appear before the Hon'ble Court on or before the date fixed for hearing of the matter. Copy of the application may be obtained on payment of necessary cost.

Ripan Barai, Advocate
Supreme court of Bangladesh, Eastern Arzoo, 61, Bijoynagar, Dhaka. Cell:01705074227

STATUTORY NOTICE

IN THE SUPREME COURT OF BANGLADESH
HIGH COURT DIVISION, DHAKA.
(STATUTORY ORIGINAL JURISDICTION)
COMPANY MATTER NO. 989 OF 2025

IN THE MATTER OF: Gonoshasthya Kendra, a charitable trust having its head office at Mirzanagar, Savar, Dhaka-1344, represented by Ms. Shandhaya Raoy, Member of Board of Trustees, Gonoshasthya Kendra -----Petitioner

-VERSUS-
Gonoshasthya Pharmaceuticals Limited, having its head office at Mirzanagar, Savar, Dhaka-1344 and another. -----Respondents.

Notice is hereby given that an application made under section 81(2), 85(3) read with sections 183(2) & (5) and section 396 of the Companies Act, 1994 was moved before the Hon'ble High Court Division of Supreme Court of Bangladesh by the aforesaid Petitioner for condoning delay in holding the Annual General Meeting (AGM) for the years of 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023 and 2024, of "Gonoshasthya Pharmaceuticals Limited". The Hon'ble Company Judge, Mr. Justice Ahmed Sohel has admitted the said application on 25.09.2025 and on 26.11.2025 the said Hon'ble Court directed to the petitioner to publish the same through Daily Newspaper in "The Daily Star" and in "The Daily Kalerkonho" form of Statutory Notices within 03 (Three) weeks from date and to submit the same by an affidavit-in-compliance before 4th January, 2026. Any person interested in the said application, may appear before the Hon'ble Court. A copy of the said application may be obtained from the undersigned on payment of charges.

H M Shanjid Siddique, Barrister-at-Law,
Advocate, Supreme Court of Bangladesh, Room No.10045 (HSSB),
Supreme Court Bar Association, Dhaka, Mobile: 01711-705115

বাংলাদেশ বিদ্যুৎ উন্নয়ন বোর্ড
Bangladesh Power Development Board

নির্বাহী প্রকৌশলীর দপ্তর
বিক্রয় ও বিতরণ বিভাগ-চক্রিয়া
বিউবো, কক্সবাজার।
টেলিফোন নং-
Mail: chakriabdpdb@yahoo.com

Memo No. 27.11.2216.755.38.2025.1235 Dated: 03.12.2025

Invitation for e-Tenders

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

SN.	Tender ID	Name of works	Published date and time	Last selling date and time	Closing date and time
1.	1169433	LM-03 LOT1 Trimming of tree branches near both sides of the 33 KV feeder Cox's Bazar-Chakaria (62 KM), 33 KV feeder Dohazari-Aziznagar (38 KM) and 33 KV feeder Aziznagar-Chakaria (20 KM), Total of 120 KM lines. Emergency repair, maintenance and ancillary work during emergencies under the Sales and Distribution Division-Chakaria, BPBD, Cox's Bazar.	10 Dec 2025 10:00am	23 Dec 2025 14:00pm	24 Dec 2025 11:00am

These are online tenders, where only e-Tenders will be accepted in the National e-GP System Portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted. To submit e-Tenders, registration required in the National e-GP System Portal (<https://www.eprocure.gov.bd>). The fees for downloading the e-Tender documents from the National e-GP System Portal have to be deposited online through any registered bank. Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP System Portal and from e-GP help desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd) Contract Number (0176265258-31).

বিদ্যুৎ/জন-৩৫১/২/০৩/১২/২৫

Engr. Md. Asaduzzaman
ID No. 01-02007
Executive Engineer
S&D D-Chakaria
BPBD, Cox's Bazar

GD-2653

EAST WEST UNIVERSITY
Progoti Foundation for Education and Development
Permanent Sanad Holder

INVITATION OF TENDER

East West University (EWU) is inviting Tender from the bonafide/intending suppliers/firms for the following items:

- Procurement of different types of Lab Furniture for the Department of GEB.
- Renovation work for three Labs of the Department of CSE.
- Procurement of 14 sets Computer with Monitor for the classrooms of Farashuddin Bhaban and 01 (one) unit Multimedia Projector along with Projector Screen for EWUERT.
- Procurement of 06 sets Computer with Monitor (Core-i7) and 05 units UPS (650VA) for various departments/offices of EWU.
- Supply, Installation, Testing, Commissioning, Implementation and Migration of all NVMe Servers for HCI Cluster, Virtualization Solution for HCI Cluster, WAF Solutions, Datascenter Server Firm Switch, Backup Solution for Disaster Recovery and Servers Antivirus Security Solutions for East West University.

The schedule of the above-mentioned tender items with terms and conditions can be obtained from the Finance & Accounts Department (1st floor) of the University until 28.12.2025 during office hours (until 03:00 p.m.) on working days. The schedule of item # 3 & 4 will also be available in the e-tendering process (<http://etender.ewubd.edu>). The price of the tender schedule (non-refundable) is Tk.500/- (Taka Five Hundred) only.

The interested bidders are requested to submit the tender by 29.12.2025 by 02:00 P.M. through hard copy or e-tender process (as mentioned in the schedule). The tender (hard copy) must be dropped in the tender box kept at the 2nd floor of the office of the Treasurer (Room No-316) of the University. The tender(s) submitted within the deadline will be opened on the same day (29.12.2025) at 02:30 P.M. in the Conference Room (4th floor) of East West University in the presence of the representatives of the bidders.

The bidders must mention the "name of the item" at the top of envelope. Otherwise, the bid document will be treated as cancelled.

East West University authority reserves the right to accept any tender in full or part of it or reject all tenders without mentioning any reason thereof.

Chief of HR & Logistics

Rajshahi City Corporation
Engineering Department
Nagar Bhaban, Rajshahi
erajshahi.portal.gov.bd

Memo No. 46.12.0000.006.46.645.23(Part-1).106 Date: 02.12.2025

e-Tender Notice (IFT: 02/2025-26)

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

S.L No.	Tender ID	Reference No	Name of Works	Tender Document last selling Time and Date
1.	1188313	46.12.0000.006.46.645.23(Part-1).104	Supply Different Types of Spares and Repairing for Excavator Big (DOOSAN DX-340LCA-K)-04.	12:30 PM on 17-December-2025
2.	1188005	46.12.0000.006.26.442.25(Part-4).105	Supplying & Repairing Different Types of Spare Parts for Asphalt Mixing Plant.	

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

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১২/১২/২৫
১২/১২/২৫

(Ahmad Al Moyeen)
Superintending Engineer (In Charge)
Rajshahi City Corporation
Tel. 0247812020
E-mail: moyeenrc@gmail.com

GD-2446



'No compromise' on territories Kremlin holds firm after US-Russia talks over Ukraine

AGENCIES

High-stakes US-Russia talks on ending the war in Ukraine failed to yield a breakthrough yesterday, as the Kremlin said "no compromise" had been found yet on the key question of territory.

Russian President Vladimir Putin met US President Donald Trump's son-in-law Jared Kushner and special envoy Steve Witkoff in the Kremlin, after earlier signalling that his forces were ready to fight on to achieve Russia's initial war goals.

On occupied Ukrainian territories, "so far we haven't found a compromise, but some American solutions can be discussed," top Russian presidential aide Yuri Ushakov said after the Moscow meeting.

"Some proposed formulations do not fit us, and work will continue," he added. "We are grateful for the efforts of (US President Donald) Trump's administration and we are still ready to meet as many times as is needed to reach a peace settlement," Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said.

In an interview broadcast Tuesday night on Fox News, US Secretary of State Marco Rubio said talks with Russia "have made some progress" to end the war with Ukraine. It was not clear exactly when the interview had been recorded.

Israeli forces kill 357 in 50 days of Gaza truce

Says health ministry; UNGA demands Israeli withdrawal from occupied Palestinian territories

AGENCIES

Israeli forces killed 357 Palestinians during the first 50 days of the ceasefire, Gaza's health ministry said yesterday, as the UN General Assembly adopted a resolution on the "peaceful settlement of the question of Palestine."

At least two Palestinians were killed by Israeli fire outside the yellow line in the Zeitoun neighbourhood in Gaza City, a source at al-Ahli Hospital said.

In the occupied West Bank, an Israeli military helicopter fired on open fields near Qabatiya, south of Jenin. In an escalation Tuesday afternoon, soldiers imposed a



IDF arrests 13 Palestinians in West Bank raids

Israel to allow Gazans to exit to Egypt 'in coming days'

Presumed remains 'not linked' to dead hostages: Israel

curfew on residents and started conducting searches, arrests and field interrogations.

Elsewhere in the West Bank, at least 13 Palestinians were arrested during overnight Israeli military

raids, reports Al Jazeera online.

Meanwhile, Israel said yesterday it would open the Rafah crossing from Gaza to Egypt to allow residents to exit the Palestinian territory "in the coming days".

"In accordance with the ceasefire agreement... the Rafah Crossing will open in the coming days exclusively for the exit of residents from the Gaza Strip to Egypt", COGAT, the Israeli defence ministry body that oversees civil affairs in the Palestinian territories, said in a statement.

COGAT added that the crossing would operate under the supervision

of the EU's Border Assistance Mission, "similar to the mechanism that operated in January 2025", when the crossing was briefly opened during a six-week truce.

Two European diplomatic sources told AFP they had originally been preparing for the crossing's opening for pedestrians on October 14 after a similar announcement, before the opening was delayed.

Israel also said yesterday the forensic tests showed that the remains retrieved from Gaza the day before were "not linked" to the last two dead hostages held in the Palestinian territory.

RELOS DEFENCE DEAL Russia okays key pact ahead of Putin's India visit

NDTV ONLINE

Russia's lower house of parliament, State Duma, on Tuesday ratified a key military pact with India ahead of President Vladimir Putin's state visit to New Delhi on December 4-5.

The Reciprocal Exchange of Logistic Support (RELOS) signed on February 18, between the two governments was sent to Duma last week for ratification by Prime Minister Mikhail Mishustin.

"...We understand that today's ratification of the agreement is another step toward reciprocity and, of course, the development of our relations," Vyacheslav Volodin, Speaker of State Duma, said.

Pak official, 5 cops killed in attacks near Afghan border

AFP, Mardan

A local government official and five police officers have been killed in two attacks in Pakistan near its border with Afghanistan, officials told AFP yesterday.

Tensions between the two countries remain high after weeks of escalating border clashes, despite a ceasefire agreed after violent fighting in October.

Yesterday, three police officers were killed and two wounded in a blast in Paniala, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province, a border region often targeted by militants.

Initial reports suggested the cause was an "improvised explosive device", Ali Hamza, a police official in the nearby city of Dera Ismail Khan, said.

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Local Government Engineering Department
Office of the Executive Engineer
Patuakhali
www.lged.gov.bd

Memo No. 46.02.7800.000.14.013.25-3546 Date: 03-12-2025

e-Tender Notice - 28/2025-2026

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

Sl No.	Package No.	Tender ID	Name of scheme	Document last selling date and time	Procurement method
1	LGED/GOBM/P TK/25-26/RW-10	1183429	Periodic Maintenance of Pangashia UPC to Hazir Hat via Dhooper Hat Ch. 00m-2025m [Dumki] [Road Code: 578963014]	21-Dec-2025 17:00	LTM
2	LGED/GOBM/P TK/25-26/RW-11	1183430	Periodic Maintenance of Kasinath Sluice Gate-RHD-Uttar Amragachia Hazrat Ali GPS Road from Ch. 00m-1990m [Mirzagonj] [Road Code: 578764008]	21-Dec-2025 17:00	LTM
3	LGED/GOBM/P TK/25-26/RW-12	1183431	Periodic Maintenance of Dewlisubidkhali Old UPC (Central Mosque)-Dargahsharif Bazar Road via Upazila Land Office Road from Ch. 00m-1290m [Mirzagonj] [Road Code: 578763019]	21-Dec-2025 17:00	LTM
4	LGED/GOBM/P TK/25-26/RW-13	1183455	Periodic Maintenance of RHD (Monasep Sikder Bari)-UZR (West side Bazita Arshed Dr. Bari) Road via Karikorbari Road from Ch. 00m-850m [Mirzagonj] [Road Code: 578764023]	21-Dec-2025 17:00	LTM

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 (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd).

Md. Hossain Ali Mir
Executive Engineer
LGED, Patuakhali
E-mail: xen.patuakhali@lged.gov.bd

GD-2649



DEADLY CYCLONE Sri Lankans comb mud for victims Death toll climbs to 474, over 350 still missing

REUTERS, Mawathura

Villagers in Sri Lanka yesterday used spades to clear away mud as they searched for the bodies of relatives and friends days after 13 homes were flattened by a landslide in the dead of night caused by a cyclone that killed 474 people.

Cyclone Ditwah barreled through the Indian Ocean island nation last week, setting off the landslide in the central region of Mawathura that left only a broken window pane, walls of ruined homes, and a twisted red sari buried in the mud.

"We managed to dig out my uncle, his wife, and his mother-in-law last night," Neil Jayasinghe, who runs a bakery in a nearby town, told Reuters.

"We just wrapped them in a sheet and buried them nearby. There wasn't even a coffin," Neil added.

11th International Technology Tradeshow on LEATHER, FOOTWEAR MACHINERY, COMPONENTS, CHEMICALS & ACCESSORIES for Footwear & Leathergoods Sector.

LEATHERTECH BANGLADESH 2025

4 5 6
DEC. 2025
EXPO VILLAGE, ICCB, DHAKA.

OPENS TODAY AT 11.00 AM

On Display : Finished Leather, Footwear Machinery, Shoe Materials, Chemicals, Components, Synthetic Leather, Accessories, Dyes & Moulds, Turnkey Solutions and many more

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Contact : 0167 451 7071
info@asktradex.com
www.asktradex.com

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

Memo No. 46.02.9089.000.07.003.22-357 Date: 03.12.2025

e-Tender Notice No. 05/2025-26
e-Tender Notice (Open Tendering Method)

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

Tender ID No.	Package No.	Name of work	Date and time of receiving	Date and time of opening
1189279	e-Tender/PEDP4/SNM/SAD/2025-26/W20.835	Repair and Renovation work of Sunamganj Sadar URC under PEDP4, Dist- Sunamganj	15-Dec-2025 13:00	15-Dec-2025 13:00
1187849	e-Tender/PEDP4/SUN/SAD/2025-2026/W2.03905	Construction of additional classroom Moinpur Govt. Primary School under PEDP4 at Sunamganj Sadar upazila, District-Sunamganj (Remaining Works)	15-Dec-2025 13:00	15-Dec-2025 13:00

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

The fees for downloading the e-Tender documents from the National e-GP System Portal have to be deposited online through any registered bank's branches up to time specified in online Notice.

Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP Portal and e-GP help desk ue.sunamganj-s@lged.gov.bd or call to +88-02996600995.

Interested person can be communicate with the undersigned during office hours.

(Signed)
Anwar Hussain
Upazila Engineer
Tel: 02996600995
E-mail: ue.sunamganj-s@lged.gov.bd

GD-2641

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Local Government Engineering Department
Office of Executive Engineer
District: Kushtia
www.lged.gov.bd

Memo No. 46.02.5000.000.99.001.25-2563 Date: 01.12.2025

Invitation for Tender (Works, OTM)
e-Tender Notice No. 10/2025-2026

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

Sl No.	Tender Proposal ID	Name of the Scheme with Package No.	Tender document last selling date and time	Tender closing & opening date and time
1	1187951	(A) Improvement of Sadaki Mohamadpur-Charpara Mohikhola Road from (Ch. 1560-3160m) [Road ID No. 250715081] under [Upazila-Kumarkhali, District-Kushtia]. (B) Improvement of Kushlibasha Joha House-GK Khal Road from (Ch. 00-1000m) (Salvage Cost Tk. 7,28,832.00) [Road ID No. 2507150493] under [Upazila-Kumarkhali, District-Kushtia]. (C) Improvement of Alauddinnagar Uttarpara RHD Road-Bhabanipur Uttarpara Sluice Gate Road from (Ch. 00-1200m) (Salvage Cost Tk. 29,396.00) [Road ID No. 250715232] under [Upazila-Kumarkhali, District-Kushtia]. (D) Improvement of Panti Bazar pacca Rasta-Biri Keya More pacca Rasta Road (with link ch.350m) form (Ch. 250-620m) (Salvage Cost Tk. 1,25,130.00) [Road ID No. 250715147] under [Upazila-Kumarkhali, District-Kushtia]. (Package No-GKRIDP/08/W-255).	23.12.2025 upto 16:00	24.12.2025 upto 15:00

These are 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. The fees for downloading the e-Tender documents from the National e-GP Portal have to be deposited online through any registered banks branches up to **23-12-2025, 16:00 For OTM Tender**. Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP System Portal and from e-GP help desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd).

Raju Ahmed
Executive Engineer
Phone: 02-47782866
E-mail: xen.kushtia@lged.gov.bd

GD-2644

Healthcare workers' strikes cannot continue Government must resolve this crisis responsibly

For two weeks, essential health services and routine vaccination programmes have been disrupted as several groups of health workers, including government nurses, medical technologists, pharmacists, and health assistants, continue demonstrations to press long standing demands. The consequences of such disruptions will be delayed treatment for critical patients, cancellation of basic health services and suspension of newborn registrations and vaccinations, which are essential for preventing disease outbreaks. Such disruptions are unacceptable in any functioning health system.

So why has the health ministry failed to resolve this dispute? The Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS) claims that most of the workers' demands have been accepted in principle and that implementation is "in progress." Yet, the workers are not convinced and allege that earlier promises were never fulfilled. This loss of trust has become the core obstacle.

The demands themselves highlight long-standing structural issues. Health assistants seek amendments to recruitment rules, an upgrade of their entry post from grade 16 to grade 14, elimination of salary disparities, and recognition as technical staff. Medical technologists and pharmacists want their entry grade raised from II to IO—reforms they say have been promised before but never delivered. Nurses are also demonstrating over career progression and pay inequities. These demands merit careful consideration. However, prolonged work stoppages in essential services directly endanger lives and violate service regulations designed to protect patients. The threat of a complete shutdown of hospitals, clinics, diagnostic centres, and educational institutions underscores how vulnerable the health system is to administrative delays and inadequate labour-management mechanisms. Healthcare cannot be held hostage to stalled negotiations. This crisis exposes a larger weakness in public administration: a reactive approach that waits for public pressure instead of addressing these issues early, transparently, and with fixed timelines. When negotiations extend indefinitely and commitments are vague, workers lose faith. When health workers walk out, patients suffer.

The government must therefore act swiftly and decisively. If the demands are financially and structurally logical, the relevant ministries should publish a clear implementation roadmap with dates, responsible officials, and measurable steps. If some reforms require budget adjustments or longer timelines, those realities must be communicated openly. Only visible progress can restore credibility. At the same time, health workers must uphold their duty to ensure continuity of essential services. Many countries allow health-sector strikes only under minimum-service requirements. Bangladesh needs similar safeguards to prevent complete shutdowns of critical care and vaccinations. This crisis can be resolved quickly if the government demonstrates clear action and workers respond in good faith. Ultimately, a functional health system relies on trust between authorities, providers, and the public. Rebuilding that trust must begin now.

Ensure fair prices for Aman farmers

Stop imports during peak harvest, buy directly from farmers

We are concerned by the falling paddy prices across the country at a time when Aman harvesting is at its peak. Data from more than a dozen districts show that despite good yields this season, farmers are counting losses instead of profits. Paddy prices have reportedly fallen by Tk 100-150 per maund within just two weeks, leaving many growers unable to recover their production costs. Farmers and traders point to a surge in rice imports during the harvest season as the primary cause behind this sudden price drop. While the country imported no rice in FY 2023-24, it brought in 14.36 lakh tonnes in FY 2024-25—the highest in a decade. This has lowered paddy prices at a time when domestic supply is naturally at its peak.

For farmers, the consequences are severe. Growers like Shakiul Islam in Gaibandha and Sarwar Alam in Dinajpur report production costs of around Tk 1,240 per maund, yet the market is offering only Tk 1,150-1,180. According to the Bogura Department of Agricultural Extension (DAE), production costs for one kilogramme (kg) of Aman paddy increased by Tk 1 to Tk 31 compared to last year. Per bigha costs have also risen due to the higher prices of pesticides and fertilisers. Many farmers also allege that prices fall sharply when they sell, but rise once the grain reaches millers and traders. For those who already suffered losses from potato cultivation earlier this year, facing another round of financial uncertainty is particularly troubling. Clearly, the government's decision to delay imports when prices were high, and then to rush imports during the domestic harvest has disrupted the market and pushed prices down artificially. Experts have rightly described this as a management failure. These actions have offered little relief to consumers while causing significant harm to growers. Moreover, the government's procurement target—only 50,000 tonnes at Tk 34 per kg—is far too small to meaningfully support farmers or stabilise prices. Strict quality requirements are also preventing many growers from selling their grain to government silos.

Therefore, to ensure fair prices for Aman growers, the government must take decisive action. Imports should be suspended immediately, at least during the peak harvest period, and domestic procurement must be expanded substantially so that farmers can sell their produce at a better rate. Policies governing imports and procurement should be revised to align with domestic production cycles and protect growers. Last but not least, the government should consider forming an Agricultural Price Commission, as proposed earlier by agricultural experts and policymakers, to ensure fair prices for farmers, maintain market stability, and safeguard consumer interests.

THIS DAY IN HISTORY

Terry Anderson freed after 6 years in captivity



On this day in 1991, American journalist Terry Anderson, the longest-held Western hostage in Lebanon, was released after nearly six years in captivity, marking a major turning point in the end of a decade-long hostage crisis tied to the Lebanese civil conflict.

COP30 brings both hope and letdowns for vulnerable countries

MACRO MIRROR



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Views expressed in this article are the author's own.

FAHMIDA KHATUN

The UN Climate Conference COP30, held from November 10-21 in Belém, Brazil, concluded with a mix of hope and disappointment. The conference was described beforehand as the "Implementation COP." Many, including climate-vulnerable countries like Bangladesh, expected COP30 to deliver concrete actions from empty promises by finally translating money, policies, and clear plans into climate commitments, but no major breakthrough was achieved, particularly in phasing out fossil fuels and advancing climate finance. However, new platforms for cooperation and some valuable opportunities were created, which can benefit countries already experiencing severe impacts from rising temperatures, storms, sea-level rise, and livelihood losses.

Three major tensions shaped almost every part of the conference. First, over 80 countries wanted a clear global plan to phase out fossil fuels, but a few powerful producers blocked it, so the final agreement made no commitment to ending fossil fuels. Second, developing countries said they cannot cut emissions or adapt to climate impacts without reliable financial support from richer nations, but participating countries could not agree on how much money should be provided or by when. Third, poorer, climate-vulnerable nations raised concerns about fairness, fearing that stringent climate actions might slow their economic growth even though they contributed least to the crisis.

Despite these tensions, one key outcome of COP30 was the launch of a two-year Climate Finance Work Programme to advance the "Baku-Belém Roadmap," which aims to mobilise at least \$1.3 trillion annually for developing countries by 2035. Of this, \$300 billion should be provided by public finance from developed nations under Article 9.1 of the Paris Agreement. Although not legally binding, the goal sends a strong political signal that large-scale funding is essential. Without substantial financial support, vulnerable countries cannot adapt to worsening climate impacts or transition to cleaner energy. For countries like Bangladesh, which depend on external support for adaptation, this commitment to

finance is significant, even if it remains uncertain.

Adaptation was a major focus at COP30 as climate impacts are already causing severe damage. The conference agreed to triple global adaptation finance by 2035, but many vulnerable countries were disappointed, wanting the target to be met by 2030. They argued that adaptation cannot wait while storms, floods, droughts and heatwaves worsen each year. The lack of a clear baseline for measuring "tripling" also weakens the pledge. Still, recognising the need to scale up

quality. Some indicators may be too vague to use effectively in national planning. Bangladesh and similar countries should still take advantage of the indicators by aligning them with their national adaptation plans. If appropriately used, these indicators can strengthen the case for receiving more adaptation finance from international sources.

The biggest disappointment for climate-vulnerable countries was the failure of COP30 in adopting a roadmap for phasing out fossil fuels. Scientific evidence indicates that the world cannot limit global warming threshold to 1.5 degrees Celsius without rapidly reducing fossil fuel use. However, in place of a phase-out plan, the conference launched two voluntary initiatives, namely, the Belém Mission to 1.5 degrees Celsius and a Global Implementation Accelerator. These initiatives aim to help countries implement their national climate plans and share best practices. But

millions depend on climate-sensitive sectors such as agriculture, fisheries and small industries. For Bangladesh, a just transition could support better planning for cleaner industries, renewable energy jobs and modern skills training for youth. If implemented well, it can help protect communities during the shift away from fossil-fuel-dependent growth models.

The conference also placed renewed attention on forests, land and nature-based solutions. However, the results were limited. Despite being held in the Amazon region, COP30 failed to establish a binding global plan to stop deforestation. The final text only "highlighted" the importance of halting forest loss by 2030. Yet, some encouraging announcements came outside the formal negotiations, including new pledges for forest finance and stronger recognition of Indigenous Peoples. For Bangladesh, protected by the Sundarbans mangrove forest against cyclones and storm surges, nature-based solutions are not optional, but they are essential. This renewed focus on forests can help attract more investment into mangrove restoration, coastal greenbelts, river conservation and biodiversity protection.

Another notable dimension of COP30 was the linkage between climate policy, global trade, and social inclusion. For the first time, trade issues were formally taken up at the COP. Countries agreed to hold three dialogues on how trade measures, including border carbon adjustments, may affect climate action. This is critical for export-dependent countries like Bangladesh. As global markets move towards greener supply chains, Bangladesh will have to adopt cleaner production standards to remain competitive. COP30 also updated the Gender Action Plan, strengthening requirements for gender-responsive climate action. This echoes the reality that women and girls face different and often heavier climate burdens, especially in rural and low-income contexts.

Although COP30 revealed serious gaps between scientific urgency and political action, leaving vulnerable countries exposed to rising seas, deadly heat, water shortages and destructive floods, it should not be dismissed as a failure. The new finance programme, adaptation indicators, just transition mechanism and attention to trade and gender offer frameworks that countries can build upon. However, this global progress will only matter for Bangladesh and other climate-vulnerable countries if national governments act decisively through strengthening adaptation plans, expanding green industries, protecting ecosystems and preparing workers for a low-carbon future.



Delegates engage in tense negotiations at the COP30 in Belém, Brazil, which failed to deliver concrete actions in phasing out fossil fuels and advancing climate finance.

FILE PHOTO: REUTERS

adaptation is important. Bangladesh spends heavily on resilience, but its budget is insufficient, making international support vital for embankments, housing, crops and early warning systems.

COP30 also adopted 59 global indicators to help track progress on the Global Goal on Adaptation. These indicators cover finance, technology, capacity-building and social inclusion. For the first time, there is a gender-responsive adaptation indicator that recognises that climate impacts differ for women, men, children, and older people. While the adoption of these indicators is a step forward, experts warn that last-minute political compromises weakened their

effectiveness. Bangladesh, whose energy security depends on imported fossil fuels, this global uncertainty creates challenges. A delayed transition at the global level affects energy prices, investment patterns, and the cost of renewable technologies.

A positive outcome of COP30 was the creation of a Just Transition Mechanism, which aims to help countries shift from high-carbon to low-carbon economies in a fair and socially balanced way. It recognises that workers, farmers and vulnerable groups must not be left behind in the energy transition. This is especially relevant for developing countries where

Slum fires, inequality and Dhaka's invisible residents



Tagabun Taharim Titun
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TAGABUN TAHARIM TITUN

The night was torn by orange flames that rose to the sky after another massive fire—the fourth in two years—ripped through the Bou Bazar area of Dhaka's Korail Slum on November 25. Within hours, the slum was engulfed in flames, injuring many and displacing thousands who stood in the smoking ruins of their belongings, asking, "Where will we go now?"

The slum, jammed between the capital's two major affluent neighbourhoods—Gulshan and Banani—is home to nearly 60,000 families, many of whom live in single rooms that house up to eight people. Although many aid organisations and city agencies rushed in to provide food and immediate shelter to the residents, rebuilding dozens of houses remains a massive task. Yet, many residents reported to their daily work the next morning, even when they did not have a roof over their head anymore. It is because without their daily earnings, they would be lost in the thin line between survival and hunger. Perhaps they knew that short-term aid is no alternative to sustained government action and long-term rebuilding support.

People migrate to Dhaka mostly out of necessity. They come in



Slum fires are not accidents but a predictable by-product of inequality and policy failure.

FILE PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

search of work in factories, services, or construction, drawn by better economic opportunities. Natural disasters fuelled by climate change also push many towards the capital. However, unaffordable housing and a lack of coordinated land-use policy force many to settle and start living in any place they can. Consequently, this unplanned urbanisation and lack of safety protocols in slums create the grounds for fire disasters.

lanes and parked vehicles make it difficult for firefighters to reach all corners inside slums—a problem firefighters also faced in the recent Korail slum fire.

Inequality and uneven development are the main drivers behind the creation of informal settlements like the Korail slum in urban areas. According to the "White Paper on the State of Bangladesh Economy," the country's wealth distribution is extremely

skewed, as the bottom 50 percent of the population owns only five percent of the country's assets. In other words, wealth, jobs and services remain centred among the urban elite. Not only do rural areas get far fewer investments, they often lack better schools, hospitals and, most importantly, jobs.

The informal economy compounds the problem. A 2018 report of the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS) reveals that the informal economy accounts for 78.2 percent of Dhaka's employment. This adds to the importance of a vastly ignored reality: the need for incorporating a sustainable, comprehensive urban plan for the city where informal settlements must be treated as an integral part. Such a plan will also decrease social inequality, negative health consequences and the adverse impact on the environment.

16 DAYS OF ACTIVISM AGAINST GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

There's no neutral observers in digital violence



Arafat Rahaman is journalist at The Daily Star.

ARAFAT RAHAMAN

The instinct is always to look away. A photo of a young woman appears on a Facebook page I never followed, or a screenshot lands in a men-only WhatsApp group filled with winking emojis and crude remarks. The comments turn sexual within minutes. I pause, feel the discomfort, then scroll past. It is a small decision made in seconds, yet repeated millions of times. This is where the bystander's burden begins, not with the offender, but with the witness who chooses to remain silent. Men like me.

Over the past year, I have seen dozens of pages that lift women's photos, strip them of context and turn them into content. A normal picture becomes material for "rating," innuendo and abuse. In recent months, I have also seen pages presenting themselves as "expose" or "story-sharing" platforms, but their real purpose is far more troubling. They take a woman's photo without her consent, add a suggestive caption and feed it to an audience hungry for scandal. These pages post cropped screenshots of private conversations and ask followers to comment "5k for the full chat." Once the target is reached, they publish the entire set—sometimes even sharing drive links containing photos or personal messages. These pages operate by turning a woman's private life into material for mass consumption.

Another disturbing trend growing is several Facebook pages presenting themselves as "news" or "public interest" platforms, filming women in public spaces without consent. The camera angles are chosen to sexualise. Videos of women walking through a market or attending a festival are edited to attract male

audiences. This is far from journalism. It is voyeurism passed off as content, reinforcing the idea that women's bodies are public property.

This is not an isolated problem. A 2024 UN Women briefing warned that AI has intensified digital abuse at an alarming rate. Studies cited by the agency show that technology-facilitated violence now affects between 16-58 percent of women worldwide. Bangladesh reflects the same pattern. The Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics' National Violence Against Women Survey 2024, conducted with UNFPA assistance, found that 8.3 percent of women experienced technology-facilitated violence, including unwanted sexual communication, blackmail and image-based manipulation.

A 2024 NETZ Bangladesh study suggested that nearly 78.4 percent of young, digitally active women have faced some form of online abuse. A 2025 report by VOICE documented 16 cases of technology-facilitated gender-based violence tracked between October 2024 and mid-2025, including deepfakes, manipulated images, threats and blackmail.

For me, these figures stopped being abstract on the morning of January 1, 2025. My partner, an education professional, woke up to several WhatsApp messages from an unknown number. Attached was an AI-generated image using her face on a semi-nude body. The sender threatened to upload it unless she agreed to "negotiate."

She called me in tears. Later that day, supported by colleagues, she filed a complaint at our local police station. The next morning, the same individual created a fake Facebook

profile using her real photos. She felt watched and unsafe. We returned to the police, urging immediate action. Officers gave assurances, but no investigation began. Hours turned into days. For a woman living with the fear of a deepfake going viral, delay becomes another form of violence.

As her partner, I felt frightened and helpless. Eventually, we went to the Criminal Investigation Department (CID). With help

the ICT Act to the Digital Security Act and the Cyber Security Act—were introduced with a promise of safety but rather became known primarily for restricting speech, failing to protect survivors. The Cyber Protection Ordinance, 2025, now criminalises harmful AI-generated content, but enforcement remains limited.

The wider gap lies in our behaviour. Men routinely witness online harassment in their

consequences of that silence are visible. Women are retreating from online spaces. They restrict their profiles, upload fewer photos or deactivate their accounts entirely. Many avoid sharing their opinions because visibility has become a risk. This retreat limits not only individual expression but women's participation in public discourse, civic life and professional networks.

Not long before the incident involving my partner, I asked a colleague whether anything could be done to shut down the Facebook pages that profit from humiliation. These pages operate openly. Their content is public. Yet action often comes only after a survivor files a complaint, placing the burden on the person already harmed. Why must women suffer first before authorities respond?

The answer lies partly in weak enforcement, but also in a culture of reluctance. Many men see these posts, maybe nod their heads in disapproval but ultimately move on.

My partner's experience changed my threshold for silence. I no longer pretend not to see what is in front of me. I report abusive posts. I challenge men who circulate sexist content and call it humour. I extend support to colleagues targeted online. These are not acts of bravery. They are the minimum requirements for anyone participating in a digital space where women face disproportionate harm.

This year's theme—"UNITE to End Digital Violence against All Women and Girls"—demands action, not sentiment. Institutions must strengthen systems. Men must give up the comfort of silence. That means confronting friends, refusing harmful content consumption and rejecting the culture that treats online abuse as entertainment.

The bystander's burden is not only the shame of silence. It is the responsibility of choice. Every comment reported, every degrading post challenged, and every harmful page rejected helps reshape the digital space. These actions tell women they deserve safety, and they remind men that silence does not make us neutral. Silence makes us part of the problem.



VISUAL: ANWAR SOHEL

from a colleague and detailed documentation, CID investigators identified the perpetrator. But the experience exposed a difficult truth. Even with the advantages we had—my access as a journalist, her support network, our combined awareness—the system did not protect us when we needed it most. If we struggled, what hope is there for a teenage girl in a small town?

Many women never reach even this stage. Some partners tend to distrust them. Some families discourage reporting. Some fear further exposure.

The failure is institutional and cultural. Bangladesh's digital laws—from Section 57 of

social circles. We recognise the abuse, yet choose silence because confronting other men carries a social cost. A message in a group chat risks being labelled humourless. A comment challenging the behaviour is dismissed as overreacting. Scrolling past feels easier.

But silence is not neutral. Silence shields the abuser. Silence tells women that even when men see the harm, they will not intervene. Silence teaches young men that degrading women carries no consequence. Misogyny is not sustained by a handful of malicious individuals. It is sustained by many men doing nothing.

The prerequisites to creating sustainable banking system in Bangladesh



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MD MAIN UDDIN

A bank traditionally performs the function of financial intermediation: collecting deposits for lending. To do that, it faces the challenge of electing good borrowers for lending. Similarly, depositors face the challenge of finding good banks, where their deposits will be safe. To attain viability, banks must manage the various risks they encounter in this process of intermediation.

In the banking business, both banks and depositors face the problem of asymmetric information—a situation in a transaction where one party has more information than the other. This may lead to adverse selection where banks fail to distinguish between good and bad borrowers. Depositors also bear the risk of selecting bad banks, as they may not have complete information about their bank's financial condition. Therefore, banks need to select creditworthy borrowers and depositors need to recognise strong banks.

Depositors' savings are at risk when they select a poor performing bank, being oblivious about its financial condition. For example, once in 2023, Union Bank reported its non-performing loan (NPL) standing at only four percent; later, Bangladesh Bank's audit found it to be 95 percent. Similarly, AB Bank reported its NPL rate to be only 31 percent of its lending portfolio in 2024. Recently, it was unearthed that the rate is as high as 84 percent. The high NPL rate means that depositors of these banks are at serious risk and cannot withdraw their deposits.

Underreporting NPLs can distort the true picture of a bank's asset quality, capital adequacy, and provisioning levels. Since a lower NPL ratio suggests healthier assets, it reduces the apparent need for capital and loan-loss provisions. Once the actual NPLs are revealed, the capital and provisions are found to be significantly lower than what is required. However, in AB Bank's case, the massive discrepancy in NPL rate did not arise from

Imprudent liquidity management is generally followed by a bank run, where many depositors rush to withdraw their funds. Therefore, it is imperative to reduce the maturity mismatch between deposits and loans by focusing more on short-term loans that are less risky and contribute to the economy. Moreover, their individual impact on the total loan portfolio is minimal.

asymmetric information. Most of these loans were sanctioned, and it was known ex ante that they would default ex post.

Banks collect short-term deposits and make long-term loans, which creates a gap between the terms of deposits and loans. Subsequently, deposits mature earlier than the loans. So, banks have to maintain liquidity—the ease with which an asset can be converted into cash—all the time to meet the demands of withdrawals by depositors. A sudden surge in deposit withdrawals may leave banks in a position to liquidate assets at very short notice and low prices.

Imprudent liquidity management is generally followed by a bank run, where many depositors rush to withdraw their funds. Therefore, it is imperative to reduce the maturity mismatch between deposits and loans by focusing more on short-term loans that are less risky and contribute to the economy. Moreover, their individual impact on the total loan portfolio is minimal.

Banks generally collect small deposits while they grant large loans. Borrowers need large loans because their large-scale businesses require huge capital. However, this process

puts depositors at risk if a large loan is defaulted. The larger the loan size, the higher the magnitude of risk.

Large loans are always a threat to bank sustainability. A large loan is often equal to at least 10 percent of a bank's capital and the default of five such loans can eat up half of the bank's capital. Now think about a single borrower exposure where a bank is permitted to grant a maximum of 25 percent of its capital. The failure of four such borrowers can deplete the total capital of the bank.

A paradox in this country is that, despite the existence of a large number of banks, only 47 percent of people have bank accounts. The rural poor are less interested in maintaining bank accounts, while the urban poor keep their money in informal and semi-formal repositories. It is impossible to have a stable banking system by keeping these people out of the banking network. Just as several banks offer priority banking to large depositors, they must also provide priority banking for the marginalised, since most unbanked people perceive conventional banking unfit for them.

For financial inclusion, banking services should be established in various locations. Banks should offer affordable services to low-income and unbanked individuals. They have to ensure fair banking for all customers, regardless of their background. Another important task is to reinvest deposits from disadvantaged communities back into those communities.

Another area that requires attention is state-owned banks, which have been operating almost without accountability. Their boards are mainly politically appointed; they often apply their power to approve loans, but rarely bear the consequences when those loans go bad. The performance of these state-owned banks is miserable. For instance, Janata Bank's non-performing loans soared to 72 percent and five other state-owned banks averaged 48 percent bad loans. Between 2009 and 2024, the government had to inject more than Tk 25,000 crore as capital to make up for the state-owned banks' capital shortfall, but recapitalisation did not improve their operations.

A culture of accountability and punishment must be established in the banking sector. All parties involved in lending decisions should be held liable for the loans that go into default. Not only the wilful

defaulters, the unscrupulous bankers must also be penalised. The salaries and benefits of bankers should be made proportional to their default rates.

Banks must operate in diverse geographic locations with various products to reduce risk. Their service delivery should be innovative, using cheaper technology. They have to

avoid credit concentration in a few sectors, such as ready-made garments and megacities like Dhaka and Chattogram, where 78 percent of all bank loans are concentrated. Merger, acquisition and restructuring of banks should be a continuous process so that poor-performing banks bear the threat of being acquired or merged. For transparency, a bank must disclose

all the components of lending interest rates to its borrowers. These must be carried out to establish a sustainable banking system that will protect depositors' savings and promote public confidence. If public confidence in the banking system is lost for any reason, its economic and social costs will be enormous and restoring the confidence will be extremely difficult.

দি ইনস্টিটিউট অব ব্যাংকার্স, বাংলাদেশ (আইবিবি)

ডি আর টাওয়ার (১৩ তলা), বীর প্রতীক গাজী গোলাম দস্তগীর রোড
(বঙ্গ কালভার্ট রোড), পুরানা পল্টন, ঢাকা-১০০০

বিজ্ঞপ্তি নং: ০২/২০২৫ তারিখ: ১৮ অগ্রহায়ণ ১৪৩২
০৩ ডিসেম্বর ২০২৫

চার্টার্ড অ্যাকাউন্টেন্ট নিয়োগ বিজ্ঞপ্তি

দি ইনস্টিটিউট অব ব্যাংকার্স, বাংলাদেশ (আইবিবি) এর হিসাব ও অডিট বিভাগে ০১ জন চুক্তিভিত্তিক খসড়াবান চার্টার্ড অ্যাকাউন্টেন্ট নিয়োগের নিমিত্তে বাংলাদেশের স্থায়ী নাগরিকদের নিকট হতে দরখাস্ত আহ্বান করা যাচ্ছে। উক্ত পদের কার্যপরিধি (TOR) ও অন্যান্য শর্তাবলী নিম্নরূপ:

১. শিক্ষাপ্ত যোগ্যতা	: চার্টার্ড অ্যাকাউন্টেন্ট (CA) পাশ।
২. অভিজ্ঞতা	: ক) আয়কর, ভ্যাট ও কর্মকর্তা-কর্মচারী ভবিষ্যৎ তহবিল সম্পর্কিত আইন ও বিধি সম্পর্কে পূর্ণ জ্ঞান থাকতে হবে; খ) আধুনিক অ্যাকাউন্টিং সফটওয়্যার (যেমন: Tally, QuickBooks বা Enterprise Resource Planning - ERP) ব্যবহারে দক্ষতা থাকতে হবে; গ) ইংরেজি ও বাংলা ভাষায় রিপোর্ট প্রস্তুতে দক্ষ হতে হবে।
৩. মাসিক সন্ধানী	: মাসিক সন্ধানী সর্বমোটমূল্যে টা: ১,০০,০০০/- (এক লক্ষ) মাত্র। সন্ধানীর উপর বিধি মোতাবেক প্রয়োজ্য অগ্রিম আয়কর কর্তন করা হবে এবং ভ্যাট আইবিবি কর্তৃক বহন করা হবে। চুক্তিভিত্তিক নিয়োগকালীন কোনরূপ বর্ধিত বেতন, ভাতা, লাভ ভাতা, আগাম, ইনস্টিটিউট, যানবাহন সুবিধা, বোনাস বা পেনশন প্রদান করা হবে না।
৪. চুক্তির মেয়াদ	: প্রাথমিকভাবে ০২ (দুই) বছর। প্রয়োজনে উভয় পক্ষের আলোচনা ও সম্মতিক্রমে নবায়নযোগ্য।
৫. কার্যপরিধি (TOR)	: ক) প্রতিষ্ঠানের হিসাব বিভাগের সহায়তায় আন্তর্জাতিক অডিট ও অ্যাকাউন্টিং মানদণ্ড (IFRS/IAS) অনুসারে বার্ষিক হিসাব প্রস্তুত ও অডিট কার্য সম্পন্ন করার সহায়তা করা; খ) প্রতিষ্ঠানের আয়কর (Income Tax) সংক্রান্ত সকল বিষয় নিষ্পত্তি করা, বার্ষিক আয়কর রিটার্ন এবং ভ্যাট রিটার্ন দাখিল করা এবং এ বিষয়ে আইবিবি'র কর্মকর্তা-কর্মচারীদেরকে ট্রেনিং দেয়া; গ) ভ্যাট (VAT) সংক্রান্ত সকল বিষয় পর্যালোচনা, দাখিল ও পরামর্শ প্রদান; ঘ) আইবিবি'র কর্মচারীদের প্রভিডেন্ট ফান্ড (PF) ও গ্র্যাটুইটি ফান্ড (Gratuity Fund) হিসাব জাতীয় রাজস্ব বোর্ড কর্তৃক স্বীকৃত হিসাবে নিবন্ধন করার প্রয়োজনীয় ব্যবস্থা গ্রহণ করা; ঙ) কর্মচারীদের প্রভিডেন্ট ফান্ড (PF) ও গ্র্যাটুইটি ফান্ড (Gratuity Fund) হিসাব, যাচাই ও রিপোর্ট প্রস্তুতে গাইডলাইন দেয়া ও পর্যালোচনা করা; চ) সমস্ত আর্থিক লেনদেন হিসাব যথাযথভাবে সরবরাহ ও Payroll সিস্টেমের পরিকল্পনা প্রস্তুতে প্রয়োজনীয় ব্যবস্থা গ্রহণ করা; ছ) প্রতিষ্ঠানের হিসাবরক্ষণ নীতি ও সফটওয়্যার সিস্টেমের নকশা ও বাস্তবায়নে প্রয়োজনীয় ব্যবস্থা গ্রহণ করা; জ) মাসিক ও বার্ষিক আর্থিক রিপোর্ট, ব্যালান্স শীট, লাভ-ক্ষতির হিসাব, নগদ প্রবাহ বিবরণী প্রস্তুত করতে গাইডলাইন দেয়া, সহায়তা ও প্রস্তুতকৃত রিপোর্টের সঠিকতা নিশ্চিত করা; ঝ) ব্যবস্থাপনা কর্তৃপক্ষকে আর্থিক পরামর্শ ও কর বিষয়ক দিকনির্দেশনা প্রদান; ঞ) কর্তৃপক্ষের নির্দেশে অন্যান্য যে কোনো কাজ করা;
৬. রিপোর্টিং (Reporting)	: চার্টার্ড অ্যাকাউন্টেন্ট অতিরিক্ত পরিচালক এর কাছে রিপোর্ট করবেন এবং প্রয়োজন অনুসারে অডিট ফর্মের সঙ্গে সমন্বয় করবেন।
৭. গোপনীয়তা (Confidentiality)	: চার্টার্ড অ্যাকাউন্টেন্টকে প্রতিষ্ঠানের সকল আর্থিক তথ্য, রেকর্ড ও ডাটাবেস তথ্য গোপন রাখার অঙ্গীকার করতে হবে।
৮. অন্যান্য শর্তাবলী	: ক) কর্মদিবসে সপ্তাহে ০৩(তিন) দিন ন্যূনতম ৪ ঘণ্টা হিসেবে মাসে ১২ কর্মদিবস (৪৮ ঘণ্টা) আইবিবি'র কাঠামো অবস্থান করতে হবে। অফিসে অনুপস্থিত থাকলে নির্দিষ্ট সন্ধানী হতে অনুপস্থিত হারে (কর্মদিবস গণনায়) কর্তনপূর্বক প্রাপ্য সন্ধানী প্রদেয় হবে; খ) নিয়োগকারী কর্তৃপক্ষ কোনোরূপ কারণ দর্শনো ব্যতিরেকে যেকোনো সময় ০১ মাসের নোটিশে অথবা সমন্বয়িত নোটিশ-পে প্রদানপূর্বক এই নিয়োগ বাতিল করতে পারবে। পক্ষান্তরে ০১ মাসের নোটিশ অথবা সমন্বয়িত নোটিশ-পে কর্তৃপক্ষের নিকট প্রদান সাপেক্ষে নিয়োগিতব্য চার্টার্ড অ্যাকাউন্টেন্ট চাকরি হতে ইচ্ছা দিতে পারবেন।

আগ্রহী প্রার্থীদেরকে পূর্ণ জীবন বৃত্তান্তসহ আবেদনপত্র মহাপরিচালক, দি ইনস্টিটিউট অব ব্যাংকার্স, বাংলাদেশ (আইবিবি), ডি আর টাওয়ার (১৩ তলা), বীর প্রতীক গাজী গোলাম দস্তগীর রোড (বঙ্গ কালভার্ট রোড), পুরানা পল্টন, ঢাকা-১০০০, এই ত্রিকোণায় ডাকযোগে আপানী ১৮/১২/২০২৫ তারিখের মধ্যে পৌঁছাতে হবে। আবেদনপত্রের সাথে সম্প্রতি তোলা পাসপোর্ট আকারের ০৩ (তিন) কপি সত্যায়িত ছবি, আইডিএবি কর্তৃক সদস্যপদ সংক্রান্ত সনদসহ সকল শিক্ষাপত্র ও পেশাগত যোগ্যতা এবং অভিজ্ঞতার (যদি থাকে) সনদপত্রের সত্যায়িত অনুলিপি, ইউনিয়ন পরিষদের চেয়ারম্যান/সিটি কর্পোরেশন/পৌরসভার মেয়র/ওয়ার্ড কমিশনার/কাউন্সিলর কর্তৃক প্রদত্ত সম্প্রতি ইস্যুকৃত জাতীয়তার সনদপত্র, জাতীয় পরিচালক/মার্ট কার্ডের সত্যায়িত অনুলিপি প্রেরণ করতে হবে।

মোঃ শাহেদ আলী
অতিরিক্ত মহাপরিচালক (আইবিবি) এবং
নির্বাহী পরিচালক, বাংলাদেশ ব্যাংক

GD-2638

'Glimpses' into contemporary art: Galleri Kaya's group exhibition features 12 prominent names



PHOTOS: COURTESY

Galleri Kaya has inaugurated its latest group exhibition, *Glimpses*, marking 54 years of Bangladesh's Independence through the works of 12 prominent contemporary and modern Bangladeshi artists.

The exhibition opened on December 2 at 4 pm at the Bangkok Art and Culture Centre (BACC), 3rd floor, and will remain on display until December 14.

Organised by the Embassy of Bangladesh in Bangkok in collaboration with Dhaka-based Galleri Kaya, along with the Honorary Consulates in Chon Buri and Chiang Mai, the showcase brings together artworks that reflect the evolving cultural identity of Bangladesh. The initiative also highlights Bangladesh's efforts to deepen cultural diplomacy and foster stronger people-to-people ties with Thailand.

The exhibition features works by renowned artists including Abdus Shakoor Shah, Ashraful Hasan, Chandra Shekhar

Dey, Hamiduzzaman Khan, Ivy Zaman, Jamal Ahmed, Kanak Chanpa Chakma, Maksudha Iqbal Nipa, Mohammad Iqbal, Ranjit Das, Shambhu Acharya, and Sheikh Alzal Hossain.

Distinguished guests, including the Ambassador of Bangladesh to Thailand, H E Mr Faiyaz Murshid Kazi, attended the opening ceremony. The Honorary Consul of Bangladesh in Thailand and the director of Galleri Kaya also delivered speeches at the event.

This second edition of the Bangladesh Art Exhibition at BACC also pays tribute to the spirit of the July 2024 Mass Uprising, driven by youth demanding their right to vote, freedom of expression, and equal employment opportunities. The movement's vibrant graffiti art, which transformed public spaces during the protest, is acknowledged as a powerful example of art intersecting with Bangladesh's socio-political landscape.

WHAT'S THE HAPS?

'Raga Odyssey'

Raga Odyssey-Eastern Classical Festival unfolds over two radiant evenings, uniting *sarod*, *sitar*, *esraj*, *saranggi*, *bansuri*, *khayal*, *dhrupad*, and *kathak* in one sweeping celebration. Twenty-five artistes—emerging voices and revered maestros—converge to honour a living heritage, inviting audiences into a rare, contemplative journey through South Asia's deepest classical currents.

DATE: FRIDAY-SATURDAY | DEC 5-6, 2025
TIME: 5 PM-11 PM
VENUE: BANANI BLOCK A, BANANI



'Boro Chele' fame director Aryan ties the knot

Popular small-screen director Mizanur Rahman Aryan – best known for *Boro Chele* and *Networker Baire* – has announced his marriage, marking a rare public appearance after stepping back from directing to focus on business. He shared several wedding photos on social media on Tuesday, December 2, though he did not reveal the date of the ceremony. In his caption, Aryan wrote, "The person who wishes good things for your life is the best thing to happen in your life."



According to sources, the bride, Tahsin Tamanna, graduated from the University of Dhaka. Aryan added that the couple has known each other for seven years and plans to hold a formal celebration with family, friends and colleagues after Eid-ul-Fitr.

'Stranger Things 5' becomes Netflix's biggest English-language TV debut

Stranger Things Season 5 has become Netflix's biggest English-language TV series premiere ever, earning 59.6 million views in its first five days of streaming.

It now ranks as the platform's third-best overall debut, behind *Squid Game* Seasons 2 and 3. The launch marks a huge jump from Season 4's 22 million views over three days—a 171% increase. All four previous seasons

also entered the Netflix Top 10 simultaneously, and five seasons charted together from November 24–30.

Netflix has released four episodes so far, with three more arriving on Christmas Day and the finale on New Year's Eve. Season 5 is now on track to join Season 4 on Netflix's list of all-time most popular English-language shows.



NEWS

Telecom white paper exposes

FROM PAGE 12
enterprises like Bangladesh Telecommunications Company Limited and Teletalk, where boards became instruments of "governance capture and politicised board-level decision-making".

The report details "ad hoc contractual hiring, repeated contract renewals treated as de facto permanent employment, politicised extensions of acting leadership [and] appointments of under-qualified candidates" including instances where fake credentials were accepted.

The committee underscores that "high autonomy without accompanying accountability often translates into favouritism and circumvention of rules".

The licensing regime between 2009 and 2024 is described as a period of "systemic weaknesses" that "facilitated rent-seeking behaviour".

The shift to a liberalised policy in 2010 was executed "without credible baseline studies or impact analysis", creating instant regulatory instability that was exploited by the well-connected.

"Licences and approvals often advantaged politically connected firms, while similarly positioned applicants without patronage faced obstruction."

The report called the IGW Operators Forum a cartel that centralised funds and enabled "opaque fund flows with alleged revenue leakage".

Furthermore, cross-ownership rules allowed a few conglomerates – specifically naming Summit and Fiber@Home – to establish an oligopoly over national fibre, leading to "high leasing costs and transfer of government-built assets under unfavourable revenue-sharing arrangements".

The consequence was a "fragmented, high-friction market" where "discretionary approvals, ad hoc exemptions and inconsistent enforcement were pervasive".

The committee found that the BTRC's autonomy was severely curtailed by political interference, making impartial oversight impossible. "Regulatory credibility suffers when the principal regulator exhibits the same irregularities it is tasked with policing," the report said.

After reviewing 42 PTD projects worth Tk 20,009.82 crore, the white paper committee found nearly half were deficient.

The Social Obligation Fund, designed to bridge the digital divide, is presented as an emblem of failure, marked by "dormant funds, irregular procurement, weak evaluation and minimal industry engagement".

Procurement rules were blatantly violated. The white paper committee identified the state-owned Telephone Shilpa Sangstha (TSS) as a "recurring bypass mechanism" used to award contracts non-competitively to favoured parties.

Direct procurement method and tailored tender language were repeatedly used to enable single-source awards, contract splitting and circumvent competitive processes, the report said.

Meanwhile, the Bangabandhu Satellite-1, now renamed the Bangladesh Satellite 1 project, is highlighted as a case study in technical and financial failure, approved without proper feasibility, leading to massive underutilisation and unresolved audit objections.

Field inspections by white paper committee members found

BTCL Wi-Fi hotspots and Teletalk towers "physically present but not operational", a symbol of investments turning into worthless liabilities.

"The white paper demonstrates that the transformation of Bangladesh's post and telecommunications ecosystem has been constrained not by technological limitations, but by systemic governance, institutional and operational weaknesses."

The committee recommends immediate action to digitise HR systems, reform autonomy and accountability structures, establish a national telecom master plan, strengthen procurement oversight, introduce an independent appeals mechanism and rebuild consumer protection architecture.

Govt vehicle runs over 2-yr-old kid

FROM PAGE 12
The bereaved father has demanded maximum punishment for the driver.

Local residents held a protest in the upazila administration premises, echoing the father's demands.

The driver, Taibur Hossain, has gone into hiding since the accident, with his mobile phone switched off.

"We have not yet received any written complaint. Once we do, we will take the necessary legal steps," said Morshedul Alam Chowdhury, the officer-in-charge of Homna Police Station.

Woman sent to jail

FROM PAGE 2
Speaking to journalists after the incident, Nishi denied killing the puppies, claiming she had only "removed them" for the safety of her children.

Meanwhile, the mother dog was handed over to the livestock department for treatment and recovery. Yesterday, officials said she had begun to stabilise after two foster puppies were introduced to her on Wednesday afternoon. The puppies, provided by local animal lover and businessman Shahriar Ami, were accepted by the grieving mother soon after they were placed with her on the Upazila Parishad compound. According to livestock officials, caring for the foster puppies is helping the mother dog heal, and she is expected to nurse them for the next month.

CA urges armed forces to play 'historic role'

FROM PAGE 12
in the capital's Mirpur Cantonment.

Prof Yunus also appreciated the armed forces for their continuous efforts during national crises such as natural disasters, political unrest, and pandemics, which demonstrated their readiness to respond and unwavering dedication to the well-being of the people.

"Moreover, your contributions to global peace through participation in United Nations peacekeeping missions have enhanced Bangladesh's global image."

"Still, we must play a very historic role in our national election and referendum in February to make it not only a landmark occasion but also peaceful and festive."

At the beginning of his speech, the chief adviser recalled the martyrs of the 1971 Liberation War with due respect, saying, "This is a very special month – the month of our historical victory in the War of Liberation. We all

recall with great pride all the heroes who laid down their lives.... We also remember the sacrifices made by people of all walks of life during the struggle."

He also paid tribute to the people who made the July uprising possible, saying, "My deepest homage to all students and the people who sacrificed their lives and were wounded to make the July Revolution possible with the dream to create a new Bangladesh."

Yunus also urged the nation to pray for the speedy recovery of BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia. "On this happy occasion of graduation, let us pray to Allah along with all the people of Bangladesh for the speedy recovery of former prime minister and our national leader Khaleda Zia, who is struggling for her life."

To the graduating officers, he said, "Today, the graduation day marks a remarkable milestone in your lives. Successful completion of the National

Defence Course and the Armed Forces War Course is a great achievement.

"It's a great moment to remember for the rest of your life. Your achievement represents years-long hard work, dedication, and perseverance. You are now ready to undertake higher responsibilities, equipped with an enhanced understanding of national security, statecraft, policymaking, strategy formulation, and the intricacies of national development."

"The [National Defence] college was established to cultivate leaders who can dedicate themselves to the complex and ever-evolving geopolitical landscape."

In an era where the economic centre of gravity is shifting towards Asia, Bangladesh occupies a strategic position that offers immense opportunities, he said, adding, "As future leaders, you are tasked with leveraging this unique geostrategic advantage to foster sustainable growth and development for our nation."

Deputy Registrars

FROM PAGE 12
personal appearance. "He has to appear and explain."

The tribunal chairman added, "Earlier he was so interested, but now he is not. Just writing a letter is not enough."

The court then examined Panna's letter. Minutes later, the chairman asked the bench officer to call Panna, saying, "We will compel his attendance." When the officer returned, two deputy registrars were sent to Panna's chamber.

Panna eventually arrived in a wheelchair.

Justice Mortuza reminded him, "You showed interest in defending Sheikh Hasina, and we appointed you."

Panna replied, "The tribunal ordered verbally, and I accepted verbally." He said he was too unwell to appear earlier.

The tribunal noted that the charge hearing would now have to be re-heard once a new defence counsel is appointed. "You could have sent a representative," the chairman said.

Referring to a video clip submitted to the tribunal, Justice Shofikul said Panna was heard saying, "My client, my leader, does not accept this trial,

then how could I go?" He questioned why Panna sought appointment if his client has "no faith" in the tribunal.

Panna said he was "sandwiched" between pressure from both sides. Smiling, the chairman responded, "You are about to suffer a heart attack due to the pressure."

Justice Mortuza said the tribunal issued multiple notices, but none had appeared, prompting them to appoint a senior lawyer. "We did not expect such behaviour from you."

Panna offered an unconditional apology.

The tribunal then indicated that it intended to appoint lawyer Md Amir Hossain, who was present in the court, as the new defence counsel.

Amir, who previously served as state defence counsel for Hasina and former home minister Asaduzzaman Khan Kamal in another case, said he would follow the tribunal's direction. The tribunal also asked other senior lawyers present whether they were interested.

At one stage, referring to Panna's comment "my client does not accept the trial", Tajul said it was contemptuous. He pointed out that although Panna withdrew from Hasina's case, he continued

representing BNP leader Fazlur Rahman in contempt proceedings. "It appears he considers the tribunal when he likes."

Justice Shofikul responded that Panna had long been regarded as an "idol", adding, "You cannot say: 'My client does not recognise this tribunal, so I cannot go.'"

Justice Mortuza reminded him: "Once appointed, you cannot withdraw without the tribunal's permission. You may criticise a judge or judgment, but you cannot disobey the tribunal."

When Panna said his client demanded restoration of the 1972 constitution, the tribunal replied, "The constitution is there. No other constitution was formulated in 1990 or any other times."

As Tajul rose to speak again, Panna asked why the prosecution was "jumping up". "Mind your language," Tajul shot back before the chairman intervened.

Tajul again referred to Panna's recent social media remarks, and the tribunal chairman said, "We are ignoring whatever you have said. In future, don't make such comments. People listen to the words of senior lawyers like you."

YouTube attacks Australia's world-first social media ban

AFP, Sydney
YouTube yesterday attacked Australia's looming social media ban for under 16s as rushed, but the government called the policy a shield to protect children from "predatory" algorithms.

From December 10, Australia will require a raft of major social media

platforms and websites, including Facebook, Instagram, TikTok and YouTube, to remove underage accounts or face a hefty fine.

There is keen interest in whether the sweeping world-first restrictions can work, as regulators around the globe wrestle with the potential harmful effects for young people.

Next polls

FROM PAGE 4

it. However, this work can't be implemented by the commission alone. Cooperation from all stakeholders in the election will be needed."

Sanaulah said this time there will be two votes, so everyone needs to be more sensitive about time.

"In the mock voting, it was seen that a voter is taking an average of 3 minutes 52 seconds. Those who vote without reading the ballot are taking 2 minutes. And those who read the ballot before voting are taking 7-8 minutes. We know this reality. The number of centres will not increase, nor will the number of booths. We need to make our voting management smarter," he said.

He added, "We are introducing a QR code system so that fake journalists cannot enter anywhere using cards."

Prosecution details harrowing accounts

FROM PAGE 3

directors general of Rapid Action Battalion Benazir Ahmed, M Khurshid Hossain, and Harun ar Rashid, and Lt Col (Retd) Muhammad Khairul Islam.

The state defence counsels are Md Amir Hossain, Hassan Imam, and Sujad Miah. Amir will replace Supreme Court senior lawyer ZI Khan Panna, who had earlier shown interest in representing Hasina but later withdrew.

Tajul told the tribunal that enforced disappearances had been "institutionalised" during the Awami League's 15-year rule, alleging DGF, Rab, DB, CTTC, NSI, and BGB units were involved. Dissidents were tracked through national monitoring systems, taken at night, and then held in joint interrogation cells and Rab's TFI cells. Many bodies, he said, were later recovered from forests, rivers, the Sundarbans, and

Barguna's Char Duani.

He described the TFI cell as a secret detention site inside the Rab-1 compound in Uttara -- a two-storey block with 29 cells, including tiny "grave cells," 10x3-ft rooms and 3x3-ft compartments where detainees were kept in inhumane conditions.

The facility allegedly contained soundproof torture rooms, an electric rotating chair, steel restraints, whips, and devices for genital electrocution. Photographs of mutilated bodies were hung on the walls, and victims were threatened with a similar fate.

Meanwhile, rejecting the plea for virtual appearance of the accused army officers in custody, the tribunal chair, Justice Md Golam Mortuza Mozumder, commented: "Where former chief justice, senior judges, former secretaries, and ministers have appeared in person before the courts

to face trial, army officers should not be allowed virtual appearance."

"The trial for all will follow the laws of the country. Everyone has to appear before the court. The law is equal for all. Here we will examine whether they have committed the offence," said the tribunal chair.

"We have the highest respect for the army, judiciary, administration, and all others," he added, responding to submissions made by the defence for seven detained army officers.

Defence counsel Md Tabarak Hossain Bhuiyan

Protests, counter

FROM PAGE 3

principal's office until police dispersed them around 4:45pm.

"If this ordinance is issued, Eden and Badrunnessa will cease to exist and remain merely as faculties. We want a separate women's university comprising Eden and Badrunnessa," said a student of Eden College.

Separately, teachers from both Dhaka College and Eden College formed human chains in front of their respective campuses, demanding the cancellation of the draft

Strengthen survey

FROM PAGE 3

geological structures, tectonic plate boundaries, and known and unknown faults, including the Madhupur and Dauki faults, and conducting surveys of active and undiscovered faults. They also called for updating the National Earthquake Risk Map.

Other recommendations included enhancing the capabilities of the Bangladesh Geological Survey Department as the lead agency and designating BGSD as the national authority for earthquake data collection and dissemination, with necessary support for equipment and infrastructure, similar to responsible agencies in other countries.

They also recommended preparing earthquake vulnerability and zoning maps based on subsurface

structures, conducting detailed microzonation in Dhaka and nearby areas with geologists' active participation, and forming a coordinated task force of experts and organisations for monitoring, coordination, and evaluation of earthquake-related activities.

Tajul opposed the plea, stressing that the accused were not on trial as army personnel. "This is not a trial against the patriotic army," he said. "These accused committed the crimes while serving in Rab, which is a police unit. Outside military discipline, they committed heinous offences. They should not be allowed virtual attendance."

Sabrina Parveen of the Directorate General of Family Planning, added, "Ensuring digital safety is no longer optional -- it is a social responsibility. DGF provides emergency and psychosocial support 365 days a year, yet many survivors still do not know where to turn. We urgently need stronger digital literacy, clear referral pathways and broader community awareness."

Trishia Nashratan, adviser of Cyber Support for Women and Children, described digital spaces as a rare lifeline. "In a patriarchal culture where even a woman's phone is controlled, these digital 'third spaces' allow women to name violence, seek help and speak beyond the four walls of home."

On September 24, the interim government published the draft ordinance for the proposed Dhaka Central University, comprising the seven colleges previously affiliated with Dhaka University.

Ensuring

FROM PAGE 3

Progress will remain slow if we keep focusing on victims instead of confronting male perpetrators through education, deterrence and stronger legal consequences."

Edward Cabrera, first secretary at the High Commission of Canada, said, "Digital abuse is not virtual; it has real, devastating consequences. Globally, 38% of women have experienced online violence. UN Women reports 66% of Bangladeshi women receive explicit or threatening messages. Canada remains committed to ensuring women and girls can live free from violence, online and offline."

Sabrina Parveen of the Directorate General of Family Planning, added, "Ensuring digital safety is no longer optional -- it is a social responsibility. DGF provides emergency and psychosocial support 365 days a year, yet many survivors still do not know where to turn. We urgently need stronger digital literacy, clear referral pathways and broader community awareness."

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Consider health

FROM PAGE 3

NCP Convener Nahid Islam said, "We told the EC that the election schedule should be announced when political stability prevails, and when every party has an environment within their organisations, as well as in the overall political arena, to begin their election campaigns. If the schedule is announced at such a time, it will benefit the EC and all political parties."

Asked how the NCP now views the EC, given that the party had previously expressed distrust, Nahid said, "We still have concerns about the Election Commission. It was formed under the old law -- we objected to that. We had said it should be formed according to the proposed reforms. But we

also want to move forward towards the election. Since the government has done this based on existing realities, we did not push this issue further."

NCP Chief Coordinator Nasir Uddin Patwary said, "Our uncompromising leader of democracy, Khaleda Zia, is ill. As a result, the political situation in Bangladesh is one of crisis. We are saying the schedule should be announced after overcoming these crises so that everyone can come on board and move toward the voting process."

Asked if the NCP sought a delay in the election schedule from the EC, Patwary said, "No. Why would we want to delay the schedule? We are saying the schedule should be announced after resolving the crises."

Media freedom

FROM PAGE 3

an essential role in providing accurate information, countering misinformation, and offering citizens equal access to diverse viewpoints.

"A confident, professional, and safe media sector is indispensable for a participatory, peaceful, and credible electoral processes," she said.

She said Bangladesh has experienced a profound political transition since August last year, and with that transition has come a shifting media landscape. This moment has opened space for broader public debate, increased diversity of voices, and renewed discussions on media reform, bringing both opportunities and responsibilities for all institutions, including

the government, political actors, civil society, and the international community.

"As we observe these changes, it is important to remain clear-eyed about the challenges that persist. The safety of journalists remains a universal concern around the world, and Bangladesh is no exception. Too many cases of violence, harassment, and intimidation remain unresolved," she said.

"Impunity for crimes against journalists must end. Germany encourages fair and transparent judicial processes for such cases, both past and present, and stresses the importance of rule-of-law institutions that ensure accountability," she added.

Centre for Governance Studies Chair Zillur Rahman also spoke at the event.

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

Memo No. 46.02.7274.000.000.07.0001.25-1746

Date: 03-12-2025

e-Tender Notice: 02/2025-2026 (OTM)

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

Sl. No.	Tender ID	Name of package	Name of work	Last selling date & time	Closing date & time	Opening date & time
01	1177112	e-Tender/PEDP4/N TK/SAD/2025-26/W15A.02150	Construction of Head Teacher's room with attached toilet of Chuchua under PEDP4, Netrokona Sadar, Netrokona.	15-Dec-2025 13:00	15-Dec-2025 15:00	15-Dec-2025 15:00
02	1177113	e-Tender/PEDP4/N TK/SAD/2025-26/W14-3809	Construction of Boundary Wall & Gate of PARLA GPS under PEDP4, Netrokona Sadar, Netrokona.	15-Dec-2025 13:00	15-Dec-2025 15:00	15-Dec-2025 15:00

This is an online tender, where only e-Tender will be accepted in the National e-GP Portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted. To submit e-Tender, registration in the e-GP System Portal (<http://www.weprocure.gov.bd>) is required. The fees for downloading the e-Tender documents from the National e-GP System Portal have to be deposited online through any registered bank branches up to 15-Dec-2025, 13:00. Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP System Portal and from e-GP help desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd).

(Signature)
03.12.25

Md. Soaib Imran
Upazila Engineer
Netrakona Sadar, Netrakona
Mobile: 01708-161456
Email: ue.netrakona-s@lged.gov.bd

GD-2639

GOVERNMENT OF THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF BANGLADESH
OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER
HEALTH ENGINEERING DEPARTMENT (HED)
Sylhet Division, Chowhatta, Sylhet.
www.hed.sylhet.gov.bd

Memo No. 45.02.0000.401.07.001.2025-871

Date : 02/12/2025

e-Tender Notice (HE-01/2024-2025) (OTM)

This is an online Tender, where only e-Tenders will be accepted in the National e-GP portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted. To submit e-Tender, registration in the National e-GP 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' branches up to Particular date and time specified on the Tender Notice.

Sl. No.	Package No.	Name of Works	Tender ID	Last Date & Time for Tender Document selling	Last Date & Time for Tender proposal Submission	Last Date & Time for Closing/Opening
1	Syl.D/Rev./HE/2025-26/01	Repair, Maintenance and Renovation of Civil, Sanitary, Electrical and Main gate Works of Deputy Director and Divisional Director (FP) office in Sylhet District.	1185649	14-12-2025 14:00 PM	14-12-2025 15:00 PM	14-12-2025 17:00 PM
2	Syl.D/Rev./HE/2025-26/02	Repair, renovation & maintenance works of Quarter of Kuchai Union Health and Family Welfare Center at Dakshin Surma Upazila in Sylhet District.	1185736	14-12-2025 14:00 PM	14-12-2025 15:00 PM	14-12-2025 17:00 PM
3	Syl.D/Rev./HE/2025-26/03	Repair & Maintenance of Kandigao Union Health and Family Welfare Center at Sadar Upazila in Sylhet District.	1185737	14-12-2025 14:00 PM	14-12-2025 15:00 PM	14-12-2025 17:00 PM
4	Syl.D/Rev./HE/2025-26/04	Repair & Maintenance of Hathkholo Union Health and Family Welfare Center at Sadar Upazila in Sylhet District.	1185738	14-12-2025 14:00 PM	14-12-2025 15:00 PM	14-12-2025 17:00 PM
5	Syl.D/Rev./HE/2025-26/05	Repair & Maintenance of Jalalabad Union Health and Family Welfare Center at Sadar Upazila in Sylhet District.	1185739	14-12-2025 14:00 PM	14-12-2025 15:00 PM	14-12-2025 17:00 PM
6	Syl.D/Rev./HE/2025-26/06	Repair & Maintenance of Laxmipasha Union Health and Family Welfare Center at Gulapganj Upazila in Sylhet District.	1185740	14-12-2025 14:00 PM	14-12-2025 15:00 PM	14-12-2025 17:00 PM
7	Syl.D/Rev./HE/2025-26/07	Repair & Maintenance of Lakkhonabondo Union Health and Family Welfare Center at Gulapganj Upazila in Sylhet District.	1185741	14-12-2025 14:00 PM	14-12-2025 15:00 PM	14-12-2025 17:00 PM
8	Syl.D/Rev./HE/2025-26/08	Repair & Maintenance works of Upazila Family Planning Store at Jaintapur Upazila in Sylhet District.	1185742	14-12-2025 14:00 PM	14-12-2025 15:00 PM	14-12-2025 17:00 PM
9	Syl.D/Rev./HE/2025-26/09	Repair & Maintenance works of Lakshiprasad Purbo Union Health and Family Welfare Center at Kanaighat Upazila in Sylhet District.	1185743	14-12-2025 14:00 PM	14-12-2025 15:00 PM	14-12-2025 17:00 PM
10	Syl.D/Rev./HE/2025-26/10	Repair & Maintenance works of Rustampur Union Health and Family Welfare Center (Clinic and Quarter) at Gaoinghat Upazila in Sylhet District.	1185744	14-12-2025 14:00 PM	14-12-2025 15:00 PM	14-12-2025 17:00 PM
11	Syl.D/Rev./HE/2025-26/11	Supply & Installation of 1 HP Submersible Pump And Repair, Renovation & Maintenance works of Fotehpur UH & FWC Under Bishwambarpur Upazila in Sunamganj District.	1185745	14-12-2025 14:00 PM	14-12-2025 15:00 PM	14-12-2025 17:00 PM
12	Syl.D/Rev./HE/2025-26/12	Supply & Installation of 1 HP Submersible Pump And Repair, Renovation & Maintenance works of Joykoth UH & FWC (Clinic & Quarter) Under Shantiganj Upazila in Sunamganj District.	1185746	14-12-2025 14:00 PM	14-12-2025 15:00 PM	14-12-2025 17:00 PM
13	Syl.D/Rev./HE/2025-26/13	Supply & Installation of 1 HP Submersible Pump And Repair, Renovation & Maintenance works of Shelborosh UH & FWC Under Dharmapasha Upazila in Sunamganj District.	1185747	14-12-2025 14:00 PM	14-12-2025 15:00 PM	14-12-2025 17:00 PM
14	Syl.D/Rev./HE/2025-26/14	Repair, Renovation & Maintenance Works of Choila Afzalabad UH&FWC (Clinic & Boundary Wall) Under Chhatak Upazila in Sunamganj District.	1185749	14-12-2025 14:00 PM	14-12-2025 15:00 PM	14-12-2025 17:00 PM
15	Syl.D/Rev./HE/2025-26/15	Repair, Maintenance and Renovation of Protection wall & Boundary wall at Regional Population Training Institute (RPTI) in Sylhet District.	1185748	14-12-2025 14:00 PM	14-12-2025 15:00 PM	14-12-2025 17:00 PM
16	Syl.D/Rev./HE/2025-26/16	Repair & Maintenance Civil, Sanitary & Electrical Works of Hostel Building at Regional Population Training Institute (RPTI) in Sylhet District.	1185750	14-12-2025 14:00 PM	14-12-2025 15:00 PM	14-12-2025 17:00 PM
17	Syl.D/Rev./HE/2025-26/17	Repair & Maintenance Civil, Sanitary & Electrical Works of Academy Building at Regional Population Training Institute (RPTI) in Sylhet District.	1185751	14-12-2025 14:00 PM	14-12-2025 15:00 PM	14-12-2025 17:00 PM

Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP System. The procuring Entity reserves the Right to accept or reject any or all Tenders without assigning any reason whatsoever.

Zakia Sultana
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কৃষিই সমৃদ্ধি

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Office of the Director
Seed Certification Agency
Gazipur
www.sca.gov.bd

Memo No. 12.04.0000.006.07.001.25.2149 Date: 03.12.2025

e-GP: Re-Tender Notice (OTM)

e-Tender is invited in the e-GP System Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) for the procurement of the following Physical Services. Details are given below:

Sl. No.	Re-Tender ID No.	Description of procurement	Tender documents last selling (date & time)	Tender closing & opening date & time
1	1164103	Providing Manpower Services for Various Categories to the Seed Certification Agency through Outsourcing	14-Dec-2025 at 12:00	14-Dec-2025 at 14:00

The interested persons/firms may visit the website www.eprocure.gov.bd to get the details of the tender.

This is an online tender, where only e-Tender will be accepted in the National e-GP Portal and no offline/hard copy will be accepted. To submit e-Tender, registration in the National e-GP System Portal is required.

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

(Signature)
03.12.2025

Abu Nadir Shahab Uddin Ahmed Siddiqui
Deputy Director
(Accounts & Finance) (Acting)
On behalf of Director
Tel. No. +880-2-49272216

GD-2651

বাংলাদেশ অ্যাক্রেডিটেশন কাউন্সিল (বিএসি)
বিএসএল অফিস কমপ্লেক্স-২ (৩য় তলা)
১ মিন্টো রোড, রমনা, ঢাকা-১০০০
www.bac.gov.bd

স্মারক নং. বিএসসি/বগপ্র/গবেষণা/গ.প্র.২০২৬-২৭/২০২৫/৪২৯ তারিখ: ১৯ অগ্রহায়ণ ১৪৩২ বঙ্গাব্দ
০৪ ডিসেম্বর ২০২৫ খ্রিষ্টাব্দ

২০২৬-২৭ অর্থ বছরের জন্য বাংলাদেশ ন্যাশনাল কোয়ালিফিকেশনস্ ফ্রেমওয়ার্ক (বিএনকিউএফ), কোয়ালিটি অ্যাসুরেন্স ও অ্যাক্রেডিটেশন বিষয়ে গবেষণা প্রকল্প প্রস্তাব আহ্বান

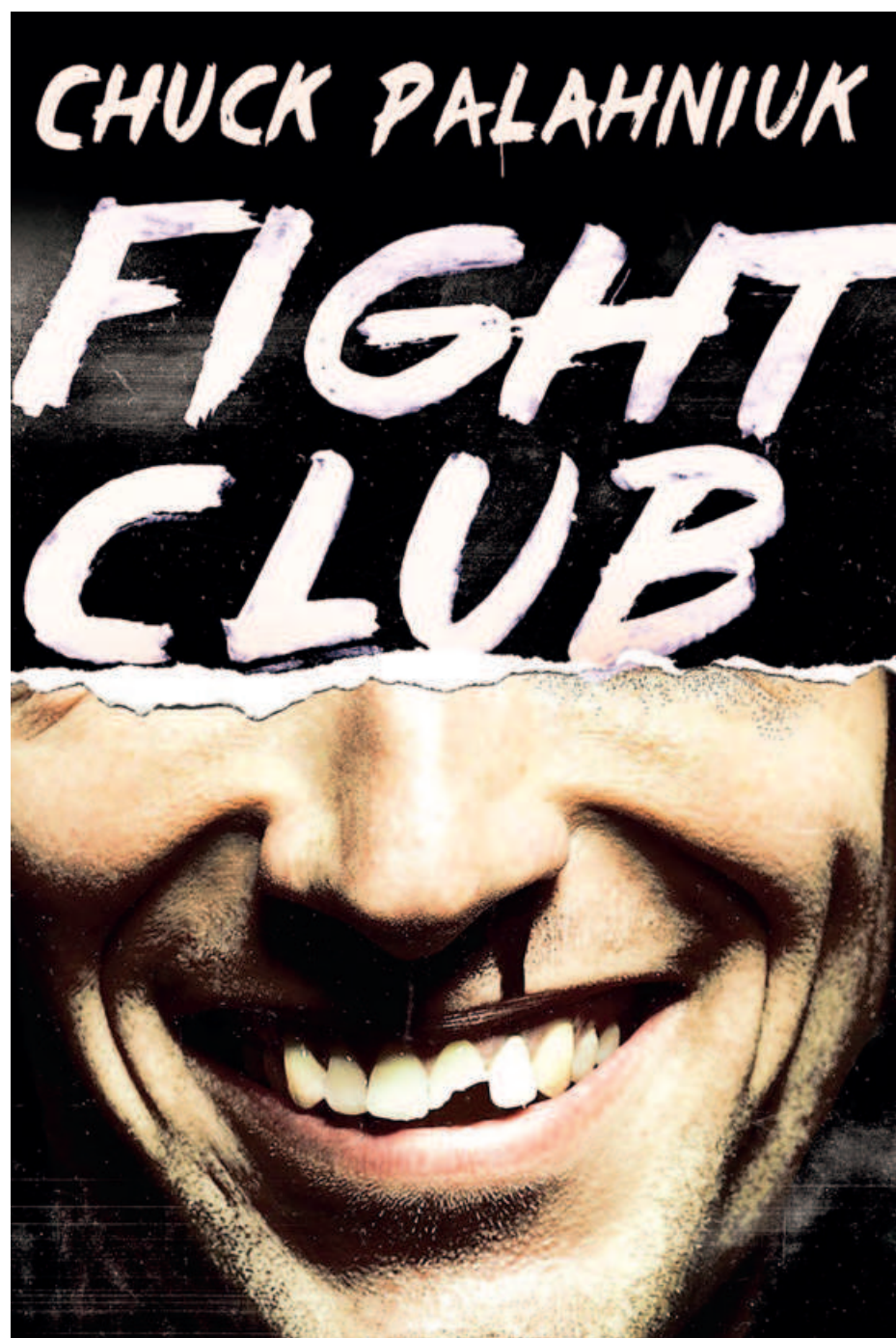
বাংলাদেশ অ্যাক্রেডিটেশন কাউন্সিল (বিএসসি) কর্তৃক দেশের সকল উচ্চ শিক্ষা প্রতিষ্ঠান ও গবেষণা প্রতিষ্ঠানে কর্মরত শিক্ষক-গবেষকগণের নিকট থেকে বাংলাদেশ ন্যাশনাল কোয়ালিফিকেশনস্ ফ্রেমওয়ার্ক (বিএনকিউএফ), কোয়ালিটি অ্যাসুরেন্স ও অ্যাক্রেডিটেশন বিষয়ে ২০২৬-২৭ অর্থ বছরের জন্য এক বছর মেয়াদী (সর্বোচ্চ তিন লক্ষ টাকা) গবেষণা প্রকল্প প্রস্তাব আহ্বান করা যাবে। গবেষণা প্রকল্প প্রস্তাব প্রদান ও দাখিলের ক্ষেত্রে নিম্নবর্ণিত প্রক্রিয়া অবশ্যই অনুসরণ করতে হবে:

- বাংলাদেশ অ্যাক্রেডিটেশন কাউন্সিল গবেষণা নীতিমালা, ২০২২' অনুসরণপূর্বক এবং নির্ধারিত ফরম (প্রোফর্ম) অনুসারে গবেষণা প্রকল্প প্রস্তাব ১৫ জানুয়ারি ২০২৬ খ্রিষ্টাব্দ (বৃহস্পতিবার) তারিখের মধ্যে ই-মেইলে ০১ সেট সফট কপি (Microsoft Office Word) এবং ০২ সেট Hard copy নিম্ন তালিকাযুক্ত দাখিল করতে হবে।
- নির্ধারিত ফরম (প্রোফর্ম): <https://www.bac.gov.bd> (নোশি বোর্ড/গবেষণা ও প্রকাশনা); Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/BAC.GOV>.
- গবেষণা প্রকল্প প্রস্তাব প্রেরণের ঠিকানা: উপপরিচালক (বহিঃসম্পর্ক), গবেষণা ও প্রকাশনা, বাংলাদেশ অ্যাক্রেডিটেশন কাউন্সিল, বিএসএল অফিস কমপ্লেক্স-২ (৩য় তলা), ১ মিন্টো রোড, রমনা, ঢাকা-১০০০। Email: dd.exarp@bac.gov.bd; ritaparveen77@gmail.com
- 'বাংলাদেশ অ্যাক্রেডিটেশন কাউন্সিল গবেষণা নীতিমালা, ২০২২' অনুসরণপূর্বক গবেষণা প্রকল্প প্রস্তাব যথাযথভাবে দাখিল করতে হবে (Part-A-Project information; Part-B-Logical interpretation; Part-C-Budget; Part-D-Project completion plan; Part-E-Short CV of the Researcher).
- প্রস্তাবনার ০২ সেট Hard copy অবশ্যই A4 সাইজের শিটে প্রেরণ করতে হবে। নামের উপরে গবেষণা প্রকল্প প্রস্তাবের শিরোনাম, প্রেরকের ঠিকানা এবং প্রাপকের ঠিকানা সুস্পষ্টভাবে উল্লেখ করতে হবে। গবেষণা প্রকল্প প্রস্তাবের শিরোনাম, ক্ষেত্র, লক্ষ্য এবং উদ্দেশ্য 'বাংলাদেশ অ্যাক্রেডিটেশন কাউন্সিল গবেষণা নীতিমালা, ২০২২'-এর লক্ষ্য এবং উদ্দেশ্যের সাথে সংগতিপূর্ণ হতে হবে।
- গবেষণা প্রকল্প প্রস্তাব সংক্রান্ত তথ্যাবলি এবং Plagiarism Checking Certificate গবেষকের কর্মরত প্রতিষ্ঠান প্রধান (উপাচার্য বা উপ-উপাচার্য বা রেজিস্ট্রার বা ট্রেজারার বা গবেষণা সেলের পরিচালক বা প্রতিষ্ঠান প্রধান)-এর প্রতিষ্ঠানকে প্রেরণ করতে হবে।
- একই অর্থ বছরে কোনো গবেষণা প্রকল্প চলমান থাকলে তা সমাধি না হওয়া পর্যন্ত গবেষণা প্রকল্প প্রস্তাব দাখিল করা যাবে না।
- গবেষণাপ্রকল্পে এককভাবে গবেষণা প্রকল্প পরিচালনার উদ্বুদ্ধ করা হচ্ছে, তবে যৌথভাবেও গবেষণা প্রকল্প পরিচালনা করা যাবে। অবসরপ্রাপ্ত বা বিশেষে অবসরপ্রাপ্ত বাংলাদেশী শিক্ষক বা গবেষক এবং বাংলাদেশে কর্মরত বিদেশি শিক্ষক বা গবেষক অবশ্যই বাংলাদেশে কর্মরত কোনো শিক্ষক বা গবেষকের সাথে যৌথভাবে গবেষণা প্রকল্প প্রস্তাব দাখিল করবেন। কর্মরত শিক্ষক বা গবেষক ছাড়া অন্য কেউ মুখ্য গবেষক হিসেবে গবেষণা প্রকল্প প্রস্তাব দাখিল করতে পারবেন না।
- গবেষণা প্রকল্প প্রস্তাব সংক্রান্ত যেকোনো তথ্যের জন্য অফিস চলাকালীন সময়ে নিম্নস্বাক্ষরকারীর সাথে যোগাযোগ করতে পারবেন।

কর্তৃপক্ষের অনুমোদনক্রমে,

(Signature)
08/12/2025
ড. সীতা পারভীন
উপপরিচালক (বহিঃসম্পর্ক), গবেষণা ও প্রকাশনা
বাংলাদেশ অ্যাক্রেডিটেশন কাউন্সিল
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ই-মেইল: dd.exarp@bac.gov.bd;
ritaparveen77@gmail.com

GD-2640



THE SHELF

5 books to read as a performative male

A guide to looking like you read without actually doing the heavy lifting

IFTEHAZ YEASIR IFTEE

If you have ever carried a tote bag to a coffee shop solely to place it on the table next to a freshly prepared matcha latte, you already know the assignment. Reading, in the modern era, isn't really about "reading" or enjoying a story—it is about signaling. It is about letting the person seated at the next table know that while you could be doomscrolling TikTok, you choose to instead engage with a higher form of brain simulation.

But you can't just read anything, right? You can't be caught dead with a James Patterson thriller or, god forbid, a book with a bright, cartoonish cover. You need a prop that says: "I am complex, suffering an existential crisis, and emotionally vulnerable—but only in a way that will also make me look intellectual".

Hence, here's a list of five essential books for the quintessential performative-male checklist, and exactly who they are for:

Infinite Jest
Little, Brown and Company, 1996
David Foster Wallace

This book puts you into the shoes of an intellectual endurance athlete. You don't just read *Infinite Jest*; you deploy it. Carrying this thousand-page brick of a book is a physical commitment that screams "I have stronger wrists and better cognitive stamina than you". The key here is the footnotes. When you are seen reading this in public, you must constantly flip back and forth between the main text and the footnotes with a look of mild annoyance, as though the author is personally testing your patience but you respect the challenge. This is peak pretentious energy.

The Stranger
Vintage International, 1989
Albert Camus

This is the book for the guy who wears a beanie above his ears in July. You want to project an aura of detached dystopia, a sense that you are simply too aware of the absurdity of existence to care about mundane things like "doing groceries" or "having a job". *The Stranger* is a short novella—which is great because it leaves you more time to look moody. It signals that you are deep, too deep to enjoy

parties. You aren't sad; you are existential. You aren't lost; you are purposefully not found.

Sapiens
Dvir Publishing House Ltd., 2011
Yuval Noah Harari

This is the holy bible for the man who optimises his sleep cycle and drinks muddy mushroom water instead of freshly brewed coffee. Reading *Sapiens* tells the world that you view human history not as a story, but as a dataset. It signals that you are ready to explain "evolutionary psychology" to a woman who has a degree in psychology itself. You want to look like you understand the backend code of humanity.

Norwegian Wood
Kodansha, 1987
Haruki Murakami

This is the bait. You use Murakami when you want to attract the artsy girl who thrifts her sweaters from Mirpur. It signals that you appreciate "aesthetic" prose and that you are in touch with your loneliness. It also helps you stir up conversations out of thin air as you subconsciously believe that cats can talk. However, the performative male loves this book specifically because the protagonist is a quiet, passive vessel for women's trauma. It allows you to fantasise about being the mysterious, quiet guy that women project their complex inner lives onto, without you having to actually put in any emotional effort.

Fight Club
W. W. Norton & Company, 1996
Chuck Palahniuk

Eventually, the performative male gets tired of pretending to be sensitive and decides to pivot to "identifying with the aggressor". *Fight Club* is for the guy who thinks he's a wolf among all sheep because he doesn't have a corporate 9 to 5 (he is a freelance graphic designer). Carrying this book says, "I am dangerous. And depressed. I might start a soap company". It is a desperate signal that you haven't been fully civilised by society, even though you pay for both Spotify premium and a Netflix premium account.

Iftehaz Yeasir Iftee, a student at IBA, University of Dhaka, is a featured poet in the global anthology *Luminance* under the pseudonym Brotibir Roy.

ESSAY

Lessons from our literary girls: Why freedom framed as favour is no freedom at all

AGNILA ROY

Fiction has long chronicled that women have always worked more than what is counted, felt more than what is acknowledged, and lost more than what anyone will ever quantify. Would the girls we read about in books thank us for the certain policies framed as generosity, or would they warn us that such gifts often come at a cost? Female characters have wrestled with expectations disguised as care, with social regulations presented as protection, and with choices curtailed under the guise of integrity. Literature teaches us that the most dangerous forms of control do not begin with force. They begin with sentiment. They begin with praise. They begin with the soft language of concern.

Margaret Atwood understood this well. *The Handmaid's Tale* (1985) opens with women already trained to interpret restriction as protection. In the totalitarian state of Gilead, every new rule is framed as a moral duty, every loss of freedom repackaged as safety, every coerced sacrifice painted as tradition. The takeover comes at the hands of wealthy, devout men who tighten their grip while the public stands frozen. By the time the women sense something is wrong, the ground beneath them has already been tacitly pulled away. What the novel makes devastatingly clear is that oppression is most effective when wrapped in the language of compassion. Protagonist Offred's world shrinks not through overt brutality but through small, persuasive reassurances that the state is merely caring for her.

The chilling genius of Gilead lies in how oppression is disguised as benevolence. And perhaps the sharpest instrument in this disguise is the figure of the Aunt. These are women appointed to police other women—tasked with teaching compliance and legitimising the regime through the authority of familiar faces. Resistance feels harder when the oppressor looks like you, speaks like you, and claims to know what is

determination. In Rabinranath Tagore's *Shesher Kobita* (1929), Labonno emerges not as a passive participant in a romantic narrative but as a deliberate, self-aware agent navigating cultural standards. Unlike the conventional female characters of early 20th century Bangla literature, Labonno actively shapes her own life rather than letting love define her existence. She pursues education and cultivates her professional and personal identity alongside her relationships. Her choices unsettle Amit, the male protagonist, because they challenge the ingrained notion that a woman's ultimate purpose is domestic. She refuses to allow prescribed norms to dictate her path. Labonno's stance

calculation, implying that women do not need, or deserve, the same scope for effort and achievement as men. Not all labour is performed for money alone. Many women, like Satyabati, pursue education and strive to work to hone their skills, assert self-reliance, or pursue passion projects. The policy implies that women's presence in the workforce is negotiable, that full engagement is optional, and that ambition may be deferred in favour of domestic recognition.

Louisa May Alcott's *Little Women* (1868) offers a timeless portrait of women navigating established conventions while fiercely claiming their own voice. Jo March is the embodiment of defiance against gendered limitation. From the moment she declares her desire to write and earn her own living, Jo challenges the 19th century notion that a woman's ultimate purpose is domesticity and marriage. Her ambition is not merely professional—it is a declaration of selfhood. Jo asserts that a woman's intellectual labour is as vital and legitimate as any man's, demanding recognition in a society that frequently undermines female voices.

In contrast, Meg March chooses marriage and motherhood. Yet Alcott does not portray her choice as inferior or passive. Instead, Meg embodies a conscious, reflective exercise of agency. She evaluates her desires, understands the sacrifices involved, and embraces the responsibilities of domestic life with dignity and intentionality. Alcott demonstrates that autonomy does not require rebellion; it requires consent and clarity of purpose. The narrative highlights that the value of a woman's life is not contingent upon her adherence to a single model of success. Both Jo and Meg exemplify freedom in different forms. Alcott also depicts the social pressures that constrain choice. Jo's ambition is often met with scepticism or gentle censure from family and society, reflecting the cultural anxieties surrounding women who prioritise work

The narrative highlights that the value of a woman's life is not contingent upon her adherence to a single model of success. Both Jo and Meg exemplify freedom in different forms. Alcott also depicts the social pressures that constrain choice.

is profoundly relevant: independence of will, whether exercised in the workplace or at home, cannot be dictated by policy or societal pressure without eroding the essence of freedom. Her character reminds readers that genuine care for women means supporting their ability to make informed choices, not glorifying one lifestyle at the expense of another.

And in Ashapura Devi's *Prothom Pratisruti* (1964), Satyabati grows up in a society where aspirations for women are circumscribed by deeply entrenched patriarchal norms. From a young age, she



ILLUSTRATION: MAISHA SYEDA

best for you. When the voice of repression comes in a familiar tone, the violence becomes easier to swallow.

The parallels with today's rhetoric are uncomfortable. A proposal that takes away a woman's autonomy over her working hours has been presented as empathy, and the celebration of stay-at-home mothers as 'rotnogorbha' operates much like Gilead's symbolic rewards—constructed to reinforce a hierarchy of femininity where domesticity sits at the top and ambition is gently, implicitly asked to step aside. Atwood warns that societies rarely lose freedom through violence alone; they lose it through portrayal of care and honour that conceal the gradual removal of agency.

Bangla literature, too, has long grappled with the tension between societal expectation and women's self-

questions the injustices and superstitions that limit women's lives, particularly the denial of education. The novel captures how coercion can appear voluntary when familial forces persuade women to internalise their confinement as moral responsibility. Satyabati confronts the constant weight of societal judgment and the pervasive message that obedience is virtue. Her struggle is for the ability to define herself on her own terms. Here, oppression is not physical but emotional, shaping choices before they are even made. Similarly, by offering full pay for just five hours of work, with the government covering the remaining three, the policy frames women's labour as a commodity to be subsidised rather than a manifestation of ambition or personal growth. It reduces meaningful work to a transactional

over domesticity. Meg faces expectations to marry and care for a household, pressures that, if accepted unthinkingly, could limit her independence. Jo sometimes questions her place in society, while Meg occasionally wonders if her choice is enough in a world that privileges men's achievements. "Just because my dreams are different than yours does not mean they are unimportant"—*Little Women* reminds us that neither path is inherently superior; what matters is that the choice belongs to the woman herself.

This is an excerpt. Read the full essay on *The Daily Star* and *Star Books and Literature's* websites.

Agnila Roy is listening closely to the voices that never fit neatly into a box. Send her your thoughts at agnilaroy@gmail.com.

WOMEN'S ASIAN CUP

Lessons pile up in build-up

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh began their preparations for next year's AFC Women's Asian Cup in late September and have since played four international friendlies against higher-ranked opponents Thailand, Malaysia and Azerbaijan, but the women in red and green lost all matches.

With their maiden appearance at the top-tier Asian Cup drawing closer, these games were designed less for results and more to assess resilience, structure and tactical progress against stronger and closely ranked sides.

British coach Peter Butler has used the window to test his full squad and maximise game-time, keeping in mind the quality of China, North Korea and Uzbekistan – their group-stage opponents in Australia.

Bangladesh's first two outings, back-to-back losses at Thailand in October and November (1-0 and 2-1), exposed shortcomings in execution and cohesion. However, their performances in the recent Tri-Nation Series at home showed clear contrast.

The 1-0 defeat to Malaysia – ranked 12 places above Bangladesh – was particularly frustrating. Bangladesh dominated possession and attacked effectively through the flanks, but they lacked composure in the final third.

Coach Peter Butler has used the window to test his full squad and maximise game-time, keeping in mind the quality of opponents in Australia early next year.

Their high defensive line repeatedly left them exposed, and the decisive goal came from a counterattack that exploited this flaw. The match revealed potential in midfield and attack but highlighted shortcomings in defensive transitions and finishing.

In comparison, the 2-1 loss to European side Azerbaijan was arguably Bangladesh's most encouraging display of the series. Facing opponents superior technically, tactically and physically, the team showed maturity and resilience absent in the Malaysia match.

After conceding early, they did not unravel against a side ranked in the top 75; instead, they responded through a superb left-footed volley from Maria Manda, finishing a well-rehearsed set-piece delivered by Sopna Rani.

Although Azerbaijan secured a late winner, the contest remained balanced for long stretches.

Overall, the matches reaffirmed that while Bangladesh possess pace, heart and individual talent, they need significant improvements in technique, physical conditioning, defensive cohesion and clinical finishing to close the gap with stronger sides.

Over the next three months, Butler would aim to refine these areas through further international exposure and targeted work on recurring defensive lapses.

England's unyielding faith in Bazball will be tested under the floodlights at the Gabba from Thursday as Ben Stokes's side confront their pink-ball frailties and the prospect of falling 2-0 behind in the Ashes. After surrendering a dominant position in their eight-wicket defeat in Perth, England need at least a draw in the second Test in Brisbane to keep their hopes alive in the five-match series.



ENGLAND BATTLE HISTORY and pink-ball woes

All day-night Tests, which use a pink ball, have produced a result, and England's record under lights offers little reassurance. They have lost five of their seven pink-ball matches, including all three against Australia.

No England side has come back from 1-0 down to win the Ashes in Australia since the 1950s, and none have won a Test at the Gabba since Mike Gatting's team in 1986.

Australia, by contrast, dominate the day-night format with 13 wins in 14 Tests.



Their only pink-ball defeat came at the Gabba in 2024, against the West Indies.

Stand-in skipper Steve Smith said regular captain Pat Cummins may still feature despite being left out of last week's squad due to a back injury.

Mitchell Starc, already the most prolific bowler in day-night Tests with 81 wickets at an average of 17.08, needs three more dismissals to surpass Wasim Akram's 414 and become the most successful left-arm fast bowler in Test history.

Amite strikes balance between aggression and caution

ABDULLAH AL MEHDI

Amite Hasan had already acquired the trait of perseverance, evidenced by the bulk of runs he has scored across various domestic tournaments, and in the ongoing National Cricket League (NCL), the Sylhet Division batter is putting in a conscious effort to balance his game by adding an attacking dimension.

Yesterday, his side defeated Rajshahi Division by 10 wickets in Sylhet on the fourth day, and the highlight of the match was his brilliant 213 off 251 balls knock in the first innings.

Amite batted for six hours across the second and third day to reach his second first-class double hundred off 221 deliveries, and for the second time in his red-ball career he got out on 213.

The sparkling innings contained 28 fours and a six, still, the 24-year-old felt he had left a few runs on the pitch.

"When I got out, I felt like I could have score 40-50 runs more," he replied with a smile when asked about how he felt after getting dismissed.

Amite hit fluent drives and backfoot punches on a true wicket at the Sylhet International Cricket Stadium, showcasing a mix of attack

and defence and the adoption of a new modus operandi.

He is a proven performer in domestic red-ball cricket. His numbers attest to his credibility, having finished NCL 2024 and BCL 2024 as the highest and second highest run-getter respectively.

"Every player dreams of playing for the national team and I am no different. Since I am playing in the NCL, that's where I'm mainly focusing right now."

Amite Hasan

But while in the past he scored his runs at a snail's pace, in the ongoing NCL his strike rate is nearing 80, considerably higher from his career first-class strike rate of 50.26 – signaling a deliberate change in mindset.

"I don't play like this all the time," Amite divulged on his run-scoring process in the ongoing NCL. "In this match, in fact, throughout this tournament, I have been playing this way.



"I spoke to Rajin Saleh sir [Sylhet coach] and he asked me not to defend too much or attack too much. He wanted me to play very natural cricket and play according to the merit of the ball. I felt this approach is very helpful since it's creating pressure on the bowlers," he added.

In the Rajshahi match, Amite had to contend with the country's fastest quick, Nahid Rana, who bowled 23.4 overs in the innings in challenging winter conditions.

"He [Rana] naturally bowls very quick and he has a very good bouncer. My plan was that when he was going for bouncers, I won't take up the challenge and leave the deliveries alone. The plan was that if he bowled anything wayward, I will take him on."

Amite is yet to break into the national side and was left unsold in the recent players' auction of the Bangladesh Premier League (BPL). However, the wicketkeeper-batter claimed to be unbothered by it all.

"Every player dreams of playing for the national team and I am no different. Since I am playing in the NCL, that's where I'm mainly focusing right now. There is no regret [about BPL], it's my fate. It's a call from the team owners and it's very much their decision," he said.

***Read full stories on The Daily Star's website*

SHORT CORNER

NCL: Six teams in title race

The title race in the 27th National Cricket League (NCL) will go down to the final round, with the top six teams remaining in contention after the conclusion of the sixth round yesterday.

BFF 'earned' Tk 4 crore from ticket sales

The Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF) generated Tk 4.05 crore from ticket sales for their three home matches in the AFC Asian Cup Qualifiers against Singapore, Hong Kong and India, a BFF official claimed on Wednesday. However, the game's local governing body did not disclose the expenditure for those matches.

Pandya returns for SA T20s

All-rounder Hardik Pandya, out since September with injury, has returned to the India squad for this month's T20I series against South Africa, while Shubman Gill will have to pass a fitness test to play, BCCI said on Wednesday.

Five-wicket Duffy puts NZ on top against Windies

A five-wicket haul by Jacob Duffy gave New Zealand a 64-run first-innings lead over the West Indies with the tourists all out for 167 in the first Test on Wednesday. At stumps on day two in Christchurch, New Zealand were 32-0 in their second innings to be 96 ahead.

India's toss-losing streak continues

India's unusual streak of bad luck at the toss showed no signs of ending. With South Africa captain Temba Bavuma choosing to bowl first in the second ODI in Raipur on Wednesday, India have now gone 20 consecutive ODIs without winning a toss – the longest such run in men's international cricket.

'Incredible' Haaland fastest PL centurion

Erling Haaland made history as the Manchester City striker became the fastest player to reach 100 Premier League goals in a remarkable 5-4 win against Fulham on Tuesday. Haaland's clinical finish in the first half at Craven Cottage took him to his century in just 111 league appearances for City. He shattered the previous record set by former Newcastle and Blackburn star Alan Shearer, who took 124 matches to reach 100 goals. "It's incredible, impressive. He was outstanding, today he was unbelievable," City boss Pep Guardiola said of Haaland.



PHOTO: MANCHESTER CITY

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CA urges armed forces to play 'historic role' in polls

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Chief Adviser Professor Muhammad Yunus yesterday lauded the enduring contributions of the Bangladesh Armed Forces to national security, development, and nation-building.

Recalling the forces' support to citizens during crises, he called on them to play a historic role in the upcoming national polls and referendum in February.

"I am proud to notice the progress of the armed forces and their enduring contributions to our national security, development, and nation-building activities. Your commitment to safeguarding our nation has been exemplary," he said while addressing the graduation ceremony of the National Defence Course and Armed Forces War Course 2025 at the National Defence College



SEE PAGE 8 COL 4



Sugarcane being unloaded from a buffalo cart at a centre in Charghat upazila, Rajshahi, for weighing before being sent to Rajshahi Sugar Mills Ltd. In Charghat and Bagha upazilas, farmers continue to use buffalo and bullock carts to transport their produce from fields to sugarcane centres as they are cost-effective.

PHOTO: AZAHAR UDDIN

HASINA'S CASE Deputy registrars sent to bring defence lawyer to hearing

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The International Crimes Tribunal-1 yesterday sent two deputy registrars to the chamber of Senior Supreme Court lawyer ZI Khan Panna, appointed earlier as defence counsel for deposed prime minister Sheikh Hasina in an enforced disappearance case, after he failed to appear during the charge framing hearing.

Visibly displeased, the tribunal first halted the proceedings before ordering the deputy registrars to "go in person" to Panna's chamber and ask him to appear "immediately".

The hearing began with Chief Prosecutor Tajul Islam opening submissions against 17 accused, including Hasina. But tribunal Chairman Justice Md Golam Mortuza Mozumder abruptly stopped him, asking, "Has one defence lawyer withdrawn?"

Tribunal member Justice Md Shofiul Alam Mahmood followed up with, "Why he is not present today?"

Tajul informed the tribunal that Panna had written to the registrar seeking to withdraw from the case.

Justice Shofiul said such a withdrawal requires

SEE PAGE 8 COL 4

Govt vehicle runs over 2-yr-old kid, kills her

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Cumilla

A two-year-old girl was crushed to death yesterday by a government vehicle in Cumilla's Homna upazila.

The accident occurred around 9:30am in front of the Tulip Administration Institute inside the Upazila Parishad compound.

According to family members and eyewitnesses, the child had come to the compound with her mother in the morning when the assistant commissioner's official vehicle entered the premises at high speed and ran over her, killing her on the spot.

"The vehicle was coming at a very high speed. In an instant, my precious Faiza was gone," said the child's mother.

Assistant Commissioner (Land) Ahammed Mofasser and the newly appointed Upazila Nirbahi Officer Shahidul Islam rushed to Homna Upazila Government Hospital after hearing the news.

"I was not in the vehicle at the time of the incident - I rushed here as soon as I heard the news. This child could have been my own. As a father, I will extend full cooperation to ensure the highest legal action," Mofasser told journalists.



SEE PAGE 8 COL 3

Telecom white paper exposes deep-rooted graft

MAHMUDUL HASAN

Bangladesh's telecom sector is suffering from entrenched corruption, systemic irregularities and a governance breakdown that has weakened regulatory credibility, distorted markets and wasted public resources, according to a government-commissioned white paper.

Prepared by a seven-member committee headed by Buet Professor Kamrul Hasan, the white paper paints a bleak picture of a sector "structurally misaligned, operationally compromised and failing to deliver trusted, affordable connectivity".

Formed on April 20, the committee reviewed governance practices across 10 entities under the Posts and Telecommunications Division (PTD).

It found that policy neglect, unchecked favouritism, politicised appointments and procurement manipulation had accumulated over the years.

The document, based on a forensic review of 10 key entities under the PTD, exposes a systemic "governance capture" that has crippled regulatory authority, bled state-owned enterprises and defrauded the public.

From the highest regulatory body to project implementation cells, the sector operates on favouritism, bypasses competitive processes and treats public resources as a vehicle for patronage.

"These structural deficiencies produce systemic risks to meritocracy, institutional credibility, service delivery and long-term sector reform."

The chaos is "symptomatic of misaligned institutional architecture rather than isolated

incidents".

At the heart of the crisis is the Bangladesh Telecommunication Regulatory Commission (BTRC), the agency tasked with regulating the sector.

The white paper found the BTRC itself to be a primary source of irregularity, with its credibility shattered by its own actions.

BTRC's practices have eroded institutional integrity and diminished the credibility of sector oversight.
The white paper read

The commission was accused of "non-competitive recruitment, misclassification of candidates, excessive age relaxations, improper absorption of project-funded staff, re-employment of retirees and conflicted commissioner appointments".

By blurring the lines between regulator and employer, the BTRC created a self-serving system.

"BTRC's practices have eroded institutional integrity and diminished the credibility of sector oversight," the report said.

The irregularities at the top set a precedent for the entire ecosystem.

The malaise spread through state-owned

SEE PAGE 8 COL 1

30 people pushed in from India

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Benapole

Border Guard Bangladesh detained 30 Bangladeshis early yesterday after they were pushed into the country by the Indian Border Security Force through the Gangni border in Meherpur.

Mohammad Ali, company commander of the Tetulbaria BGB camp, said the detainees are residents of various districts across Bangladesh. Among them are 10 women and four children.

Quoting the detainees, Mohammad Ali said they entered India illegally through different border areas with the help of brokers at various times. They were later arrested by Indian police and imprisoned in Kolkata.

BSF members sent them back via the Tetulbaria border.

After completing legal formalities, the detainees were handed over to Gangni Police Station, he added.

Boni Israel, officer-in-charge of the station, said the 30 people were verified as Bangladeshis. "Further actions will be taken as per legal procedures."

Sick young ants invite destruction to save colony



AFP, Paris

Sick young ants release a smell to tell worker ants to destroy them to protect the colony from infection, scientists said Tuesday, adding that queens do not seem to commit this act of self-sacrifice.

Many animals conceal illness for social reasons. For example, sick humans are known to risk infecting others so they can still go to the office - or the pub.

Ant colonies, however, act as one "super-organism" which works to ensure the survival of all, similar to how infected cells in our bodies send out a "find-me and eat-me" signal, according to an Austria-led team of scientists.

Ant nests are a "perfect place for a disease outbreak to occur because there are thousands of ants crawling over each other," Erika Dawson, a behavioural ecologist at the Institute of Science and Technology Austria and lead author of a new study, told AFP.

When adult worker ants get an illness that could spread through the colony, they leave the nest to die alone. Young ants, known as pupae, in contrast are still trapped inside a cocoon.

Scientists had already figured out that when these pupae are terminally ill, there is a chemical change that produces a particular smell.

SURVEILLANCE FEARS India revokes order to preload app on phones after outcry

REUTERS, New Delhi

India yesterday revoked its order to smartphone makers to preload a state-run cybersecurity app days after the plan triggered a major backlash from Prime Minister Narendra Modi's opponents and privacy activists over surveillance fears.

The Indian government had confidentially ordered companies including Apple, Samsung and Xiaomi to preload new phones with an app called Sanchar Saathi, or Communication Partner, within 90 days, Reuters was first to report on Monday.

"Government has decided not to make the pre-installation mandatory for mobile manufacturers," India's communications ministry said in a press statement.

The move comes after days of protests from opposition parties over the issue, while newspaper editorials joined privacy advocates in denouncing the move. The government also found itself at odds with phone manufacturers, as Apple and Samsung had plans to not comply with the directive, sources said.

The plan had become a hot issue on Indian prime time news, with politicians and privacy advocates sparring over its pros and cons.

The government had said the app only helps track and block stolen phones and prevents them from being misused.



Students block the Science Lab intersection yesterday, demanding the immediate issuance of an ordinance for Dhaka Central University, which comprises seven government colleges in the capital. The blockade disrupted vehicular movement and caused traffic jams in the area.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

No conspiracy in collapse of China spy case: UK inquiry

AFP, London

A high-profile case against two British men accused of spying for China collapsed because of "systemic failures" and not a government conspiracy, a UK parliamentary inquiry concluded yesterday.

The handling of the case against Christopher Cash and Christopher Berry was at times "shambolic" and reforms are needed to prevent "similar issues" happening again, the cross-party committee of MPs and members of the House of Lords said in its report.

Ex-parliamentary researcher Cash and China-based Berry, both of whom deny wrongdoing, had been accused of passing secrets to Beijing between 2021 and 2023.

The inquiry was launched after the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) dropped the charges against the two men in September, saying the government had failed to provide evidence that China was a national security threat.