



"The objective was to destroy Hamas. Gaza is destroyed, but Hamas is not... something fundamentally wrong with the way this is conducted."
Guterres on Israel's conduct of war in Gaza

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Star

SECOND EDITION

THE DAILY

ON FRIDAY

DHAKA FRIDAY DECEMBER 5, 2025



REGD. No. DA 781

VOL. XXXV No. 313

AGRAHAYAN 20, 1432 BS

www.thedailystar.net

JAMADIUS SANI 13, 1447 HJURI

16 PAGES: Tk 15.00



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Khaleda may fly to London today

Zubaida arriving in Dhaka to accompany her

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia is likely to fly to London for advanced medical treatment today.

Her medical board made the decision after a team of foreign and local doctors, including Dr Richard Beale from the United Kingdom and four specialists from China, reviewed her condition and deemed her fit for the journey.

The 80-year-old former prime minister has been undergoing treatment in the Coronary Care Unit of Evercare Hospital since November 23.

An air ambulance provided by the Emir of Qatar will take her to London.

"If everything goes well, we will leave with Begum Khaleda Zia for London on a Qatari air ambulance by Friday morning," her personal physician, AZM Zahid Hossain, told reporters outside Evercare yesterday afternoon.

However, the BNP Media Cell last night reported that the air ambulance was running behind schedule due to some technical issues.

Khaleda's daughter-in-law, Dr Zubaida Rahman, is scheduled to arrive in Dhaka from London this morning and travel with the BNP chief.



Party sources said Zubaida, who is also a member of the medical board, will head directly to Evercare.

Once the final health check is complete, Khaleda is expected to board the air ambulance from Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport.

The flight will make a stopover in Qatar before reaching Heathrow airport, London.

Khaleda's son and BNP acting chairman, Tarique Rahman, who has been living in the UK with his family since 2008, will receive his mother at Heathrow.

The BNP chairperson is supposed to be taken directly to London Bridge Hospital.

Earlier this year, Khaleda spent four months in London for treatment. She returned home on May 6.

She was admitted to Evercare on November 23 with infections in her heart and lungs. She has long been battling multiple health complications, including liver cirrhosis. She has a pacemaker and has previously undergone stent implantation in her heart.

A 12-member medical board comprising foreign and local specialists is overseeing the former prime minister's treatment.

The party and Khaleda's family selected 14 members to accompany her on her trip.

Her daughter-in-law Syeda Sharmila Rahman; her adviser Anamul Haq Chowdhury; Tarique's assistant Md Abdul Hai Mollick and his personal secretary Mohammad Masudur Rahman; two Special Security Force (SSF) officers Hasan Shahriar Iqbal and Syed Samin Mahfuz; and two caregivers Fatema Begum and Rupa Sikder, will be travelling with her.

AZM Zahid Hossain, also a BNP Standing Committee member, said several local specialists and two foreign physicians will also accompany Khaleda.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 4



Diesel-Electric Multiple Unit (DEMU) trains are left to the elements near a shed at the Kamalapur Railway Station. The government had bought 20 sets of these in 2013 spending over Tk 600 crore. Over the years, the trains appeared problematic for Bangladesh Railway and were taken off service one by one. The photos were taken recently.

PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON

Police commission okayed, but minus independence

Provisions on recommending recruitment, posting and shielding the force from interference omitted

MUNTAKIM SAAD

The government yesterday approved the Police Commission Ordinance 2025, but the commission will not have the authority to recommend the recruitment, promotion, or posting of officers, including the inspector general.

The commission's power to recommend measures for ensuring skilled officers in the force, free of external influence, was also removed from the ordinance, while the word "independent" was omitted from the title.

Officials with knowledge of the approval process, however, told The Daily Star that all these provisions were in the primary draft of the ordinance.

A former police official, preferring anonymity, said the approval means these specific powers will remain with the home ministry, potentially allowing political influence within the force to continue.

Environment Adviser Syeda Rizwana Hasan detailed the objectives and functions of the five-member Police Commission while announcing the ordinance's approval at a press briefing at the Foreign Service Academy in Dhaka.

Chief Adviser's Press Secretary Shafiqul Alam and Deputy Press Secretary Abul Kalam Azad

Majumder also attended the briefing, which followed a meeting of the advisory council chaired by Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus.

... The control of the commission will come from the government and political parties. The influence will continue.

M Akbar Ali, president of the Retired Police Officers' Welfare Association

The commission, which will be set up through the ordinance, will comprise a retired Supreme Court judge as its chief, a retired government officer who served as district magistrate not below Grade 1, a retired police officer with the rank of additional inspector general not below Grade 1, a university professor either retired

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

BNP finalises its candidates for key battles

Picks 36 more runners, including 4 for Dhaka seats

SAJJAD HOSSAIN

The BNP has announced candidates for 36 more constituencies, including several in Dhaka, where the National Citizen Party is fielding its top leaders as contenders in the upcoming national elections.

The party gave a ticket to Reza Kibria, son of former finance minister Shah AMS Kibria from the previous Awami League government. Reza joined the BNP just three days ago.

However, Mir Mahbubur Rahman Snigdho, brother of July uprising martyr Mir Mahfuzur Rahman Mugdho, is not among the new candidates. Snigdho had joined the BNP on November 3.

Announcing the candidates at a press conference yesterday, BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhru Islam Alamgir said the party would announce the candidates for its alliance partners at the right time.

On November 3, BNP released a preliminary list of candidates for 237 constituencies. A day later, the ticket for Madaripur-1 was suspended. In total, the party has

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Tk 35,000cr more needed to revive the fragile banks

Says BB governor

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

An estimated Tk 70,000 crore, along with time and careful management, would be needed to solve the crisis in the banking sector, said Bangladesh Bank Governor Ahsan H Mansur.

Speaking at a dialogue hosted by the Bangladesh Investment Development Authority in Dhaka yesterday, he said, "We have already started addressing the issues of five weak banks and provided Tk 35,000 crore. But several others remain at risk. Resolving their problems will require another Tk 35,000 crore, bringing the total cost to around Tk 70,000 crore."



SEE PAGE 2 COL 4



Amid cold and foggy weather, labourers huddle on a three wheeler, as they head to Rajshahi city in search of work. The chill has already gripped the northern region. The photo was taken around 8:00am yesterday in Paba upazila of Rajshahi.

PHOTO: AZAHAR UDDIN

EC plans to unveil polls schedule on December 10 or 11

MOHIUDDIN ALAMGIR and AHMED DEPTO

The Election Commission is likely to announce the election schedule on December 10 or 11, setting the stage for the much-anticipated national polls and the referendum on the July charter in mid-February.

The commission is expected to hold a meeting on Sunday (December 7) to finalise preparations ahead of the announcement.

In keeping with tradition, it has sought an appointment with President Mohammed Shahabuddin for a briefing before formally announcing the schedule. Before meeting with the president, the commission will also meet with Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus.

Speaking to reporters at a workshop organised by the Election Training Institute yesterday, EC Senior Secretary Akhtar Ahmed said they have written to the president seeking an appointment on December 10 or 11.

Mohammed Shagor Hossain, assistant private secretary to the president, confirmed the request and said, "The president will meet with the EC at 12 noon on December 10." Meanwhile, two senior election officials confirmed that the commission would meet with the chief adviser before meeting the president.

One commissioner, speaking anonymously, said, "If there's no major change, there's a high possibility that we'll announce the [election] schedule the same day after meeting the president or the day after."

Earlier on Wednesday, Election Commissioner Anwarul Islam Sarkar told this newspaper that the schedule is likely to be announced between December 8 and 14, with the polls and referendum expected between February 8

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

DMP reshuffles 50 OCs, 14 DCs ahead of polls

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Ahead of the upcoming national election, the Dhaka Metropolitan Police has reshuffled the officers in-charge of all 50 police stations under its jurisdiction.

In a separate move, 14 deputy commissioners of the DMP were reassigned to its different divisions.

In this regard, three circulars signed by DMP Commissioner Sheikh Md Sazzat Ali were issued yesterday.

According to the circulars, the police officers have been transferred or reassigned in public interest, and the orders will remain in force until further instructions.

On December 2, the government appointed or transferred 527 police officials as OCs across the country through a lottery system, a major reshuffle aimed at ensuring stability during the national election.

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

According to police sources,

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Dust blankets the Tikrabadh area on Khulna-Satkhira highway. With sand, gravel, and other repair materials left exposed, the movement of vehicles kicks dust into the air. The photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: HABIBUR RAHMAN

Overseas votes to be counted with polls-day ballots

Advisory Council approves RPO amendment

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Two amendments to the Representation of the People Order (RPO) pertaining to postal ballots were approved at the latest meeting of the Advisory Council yesterday.

The amendments comprise clear instructions on which postal ballots will not be accepted and rules for counting postal ballots sent by overseas voters.

The ballots with more than one stamp, no stamp, no signature on the declaration form or those that reach the returning officer after the deadline will not be accepted.

All valid postal ballots will be counted at the same time as in-person votes.

Also at yesterday's meeting, the Forest and Tree Conservation Ordinance 2025 was approved, said Syeda Rizwana Hasan, adviser for Environment, Forest and Climate Change, at a briefing afterwards.

The ordinance introduces responsibilities that were not included in the old 1927 forest law.

The new ordinance defines the duties of the Forest Department, adds rules for restoring damaged forests and protects the cultural and legal rights of indigenous communities traditionally living in forest areas, she said.

EC plans to unveil polls schedule

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and 14.

Officials explained that voting days are usually chosen with weekends in mind – either Sunday (the first working day) or Thursday (the last). February 13 and 14 fall on a weekend, while Ramadan is expected to begin on February 17 or 18.

Polls are generally not held during the holy month, and campaign periods are scheduled to avoid overlapping with it. The last three national elections were all held on Sundays.

A senior government official said holidays or weekends around the polls would make voting easier, especially for city dwellers. "With holidays before and after the election, voters could travel to their hometowns, cast ballots, and return to work without difficulty."

"In the past, many urban residents were reluctant to go back to their villages to vote when no holidays were provided. However, the final decision rests with the Election Commission."

The announcement of the election schedule will mark the official start of the electoral process. Under the Representation of the People Order, 1972, the EC will issue the election timetable through a gazette notification.

According to the Code of Conduct for Political Parties and Candidates in Parliamentary Elections, campaigns may begin only three weeks (21 days) before polling.

The schedule typically reserves this period for campaigning, while the preceding days are allocated to finalising candidacies; nomination paper collections and submission, scrutiny, withdrawal, EC's disposal of appeals against scrapped nominations, and allocation of symbols.

ELECTION PREPARATIONS

Since the interim government came to power on August 8, 2024, after deposing prime minister Sheikh Hasina fled to India following a mass uprising, Chief Adviser Yunus has repeatedly emphasised that reforms, trials of those behind the July killings,

and the election are the government's top priorities.

BNP and its allies initially demanded that the election be held by December. On June 6, Yunus announced in a televised address that the polls would be held in the first half of April 2026.

Amid criticism, on June 13 he said polls could be held the week before Ramadan in 2026 if preparations were complete. He made the statement after BNP acting chairman Tarique Rahman, during a meeting in London, suggested holding the election before Ramadan.

In mid-October, in a show of unity, 25 parties – except five, including the National Citizen Party – signed the July National Charter following three rounds of negotiations among 30 parties and the National Consensus Commission.

On October 28, the consensus commission submitted recommendations for implementing the charter, offering two alternatives – both involving a referendum and an implementation order. The timing of the referendum was left to the government.

Divisions soon deepened over several issues, including the referendum timing. On November 3, the government asked parties to reach a consensus within a week or it would "act as necessary."

After the deadline expired, the government on November 13 announced that the national election and referendum would be held on the same day, and that an upper house would be introduced through proportional representation.

Meanwhile, the EC and the government are proceeding with preparations for the February polls.

The commission has published the final voter list, confirmed the registration of two new political parties with two more awaiting approval, and launched a mobile app to help expatriate Bangladeshis register as voters.

The government has amended the Representation of the People

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

On September 4, the EC finalised the delimitation of 300 constituencies, redrawing boundaries of 46 seats across 16 districts.

It has also held meetings with parties and other stakeholders.

ADMINISTRATIVE RESTRUCTURING

The government has also almost completed major reshuffles in the field administration and police.

It has changed 50 deputy commissioners and police superintendents in all 64 districts as well as officers in charge of 577 of 639 police stations.

In national elections, deputy commissioners of districts and the divisional commissioners of Dhaka and Chattogram usually serve as returning officers, while police remain responsible for maintaining law and order.

BNP'S NEW PROPOSAL

In another development, a BNP delegation, led by Standing Committee member Nazrul Islam, met with Chief Election Commissioner AMM Nasir Uddin yesterday and proposed increasing the number of polling booths, marking places and ballot seals, since the polls and referendum will take place on the same day.

Speaking to reporters after the meeting at the EC office, Nazrul said his party is not in favour of deferring the national election.

Asked about BNP's earlier request to delay the announcement of the schedule due to Chairperson Khaleda Zia's health condition, he said, "Today we've announced some more candidates, which shows that we are engaged in the electoral process. We don't want to step outside this process unless, God forbid, unavoidable circumstances arise."

He added that the election should be held as planned and therefore the schedule should be declared accordingly.

omitted.

Several police officials expressed dissatisfaction over the omissions, saying the agency will again be controlled by the government.

Contacted by The Daily Star, M Akbar Ali, president of the Retired Police Officers' Welfare Association, said, "What we are asking for is a reflection of public aspirations, for the police to be a people friendly force. But now, the control of the commission will come from the government and political parties. The influence will continue."

"If the members of the commission set the policies but the government does not follow them, then what's the point? The government will do whatever it wants, and that is what will happen, right?"

He added, "Recommendations mean nothing if the government chooses to ignore them. We will never know what was recommended or whether it was implemented."

"The police will remain under colonial-style control, used as an instrument of oppression against the people. The trend of using the police to suppress the public will continue. We are making this point clear."

Khaleda may fly

FROM PAGE 1

The doctors from Bangladesh are AZM Zahid Hossain, Fakhruddin Mohammad Siddiqui, Shahabuddin Talukder, Nooruddin Ahmed, Md Zafor Iqbal, and Md Al Mamun.

Two additional doctors from the UK are also expected to join the team. Meanwhile, the interim government yesterday urged all mosques across the country to arrange prayers for Khaleda Zia after Juma prayers today.

The BNP also announced prayers in all places of worship for today.

Party leaders and activists continued to gather outside the hospital yesterday.

Members of the SSF, police, and BGB were stationed inside the hospital. The road in front of the hospital's main gate has been cordoned off to keep out crowd of visitors.

Tk 35,000cr more

FROM PAGE 1

He said this massive amount cannot be mobilised overnight. "We are considering allocations over multiple fiscal years. It will have to be a phased recovery, not a one-time fix."

The central bank is prioritising the protection of depositors, Mansur said, adding, "The defaulters will face the law, but innocent depositors must not suffer."

Mansur also acknowledged that the non-performing loan (NPL) situation is more serious than previously disclosed. The reported NPL figure had been hovering around 9 percent in the past. It is 36 percent now. "We are not going to manipulate the data. The public deserves transparency."

The governor said the central bank aims to bring down the NPL rate to 10 percent by March 2026. "It might take 10 years to reduce it to 4-5 percent, but that is the sustainable path."

Viable institutions must not be allowed to collapse, he said. "Institutions are national assets. Closing them would be the easy way out; we could just halt credit lines. But that would destroy jobs and value. Instead, we are choosing the harder path, keeping businesses alive while holding people accountable."

However, he said Bangladesh Bank is taking steps to liquidate nine non-bank financial institutions (NBFIs), and four to five more NBFIs could face liquidation if they fail to restructure or raise fresh capital.

"Those that can prove viability will be given a chance to survive. We're not promising miracles. But with time, transparency, and the rule of law, we can rebuild trust in the financial system."

Iran Guards warn US vessels during drill in Gulf

AFP, Tehran

Iran's Revolutionary Guards Corps yesterday kicked off naval wargames in the Gulf, issuing warnings to US warships in the area, more than five months after the 12-day war with Israel that briefly drew in American forces.

State TV said the drill showcases the "sacrifice and spirit of resistance" of the IRGC's naval forces "to confront any threat" against Iran following the June war.

The strikes, which killed more than a thousand people, including senior IRGC commanders, prompted Iran to retaliate with drone and missile strikes that killed dozens in Israel.

BNP finalises candidates for key battles

FROM PAGE 1

now announced candidates for 272 constituencies. The remaining 28 constituencies will be announced "in due time", said Fakhru.

The BNP nominated former Chattra Dal General Secretary Habibur Rashid for Dhaka-9. NCP Senior Joint Secretary Tasnim Jara collected a nomination form for the same seat.

The BNP nominated SM Jahangir Hossain, joint convener of Dhaka north BNP, for Dhaka-18, for which NCP Chief Coordinator Nasiruddin Pataway also collected a nomination form.

The party announced BNP National Executive Committee Member Sheikh Rabiul Alam as its candidate for Dhaka-10. However, LGRD Adviser Asif Mahmud Sajib Bhuiyan expressed interest in running from there. He has already changed his constituency from Cumilla and become a voter of Dhaka-10.

Rabiul, also the managing director of Pleasant Properties Ltd, has already received a show-cause notice from the BNP for his alleged involvement in criminal activities. He was the BNP's candidate for Dhaka-10 in the 2018 national elections.

With the new nominations, BNP has now finalised candidates for 17 out of 20 Dhaka constituencies. The remaining constituencies are Dhaka-13, 17, and 20.

Reza Kibria has been nominated as BNP's candidate for Habiganj-1. In the 2018 elections, he contested from the same seat using the "Sheaf of Paddy" symbol as a candidate of the Gono Forum, an ally of the Jatiya Oikya Front led by eminent jurist Dr Kamal Hossain.

For Dhaka-7, BNP nominated Hamidur Rahman, a member of the party's central executive committee, where Mamunul Haque, ameer of the

Bangladesh Khelafat Majlis, is likely to contest.

Ariful Haque Chowdhury, two-time mayor of Sylhet City Corporation, will contest the national polls for the first time as BNP's candidate for Sylhet-4.

Even though BNP had adopted a policy of nominating only one candidate from a family, the party has made exceptions in a few cases.

BNP nominated former deputy minister Abdus Salam Pinto for Tangail-2. Yesterday, his younger brother Sultan Salahuddin Tuku, also the publicity affairs secretary of BNP, was nominated for Tangail-5.

As per yesterday's announcement, Abdus Salam has been nominated for Thakurgaon-2 constituency, AKM Kamruzzaman for Dinajpur-5, Jahidul Islam Dhola for Naogaon-5, Anwarul Islam for Natore-3, Selim Reza for Sirajganj-1, M Iqbal Hossain for Jashore-5, Monirul Khan for Narail-2, Amir Ezaz Khan for Khulna-1, Shahidul Alam Talukder for Patuakhali-2, Joydul Abedin for Barishal-3, Rafiqul Islam Jamal for Jhalakathi-1, Abu Wahab Akhnda for Mymensingh-4, Majharul Islam for Kishoreganj-1, Sheikh Mojibor Rahman Iqbal for Kishoreganj-5.

Other nominees include SA Jinnah Kabir for Manikganj-1, Kamruzzaman Ratan for Munshiganj-3, Mojibor Rahman for Gazipur-1, Harun Ar Rashid for Rajbari-2, Khandaker Nasirul Islam for Faridpur-1, Nadira Akhter for Madaripur-1, Jahander Ali Khan for Madaripur-2, Nasir Hossain Chowdhury for Sunamganj-2, Nurul Islam for Sunamganj-4, Selim Bhuiyan for Cumilla-2, Mostofa Kamal Pasha for Chattogram-3, Gias Uddin Quader Chowdhury for Chattogram-6, Abu Sufiyan for Chattogram-9, Nazmul Mustofa Amin for Chattogram-15 and Alomgir Mahfuz Ullah Farid for Cox's Bazar-2.

Keep power, energy infrastructure out of war

Turkey warns Moscow, Kyiv

AFP, Istanbul

Turkey warned Russia and Ukraine against targeting energy infrastructure following several Black Sea drone attacks claimed by Kyiv on Russia-linked tankers, Energy Minister Alparslan Bayraktar said.

Speaking to a small group of journalists in Istanbul on Wednesday, Bayraktar said any disruption would hit global markets and people's pocketbooks, noting that energy facilities had already been struck in both countries.

"We tell all the parties, in Russia and Ukraine: keep the energy infrastructures out of this war, because this is very much linked to people's daily lives," he said.

Last Friday, two empty oil tankers were hit by explosions off Turkey's Black Sea coast, at least one of which was on its way to a Russian port. A Ukrainian security source told AFP its forces had used naval drones to hit the vessels which were "covertly transporting Russian oil".

A third tanker was struck on Tuesday en route from Russia to Georgia, with Russia saying it had also been hit by the drone – but this time, Ukraine denied any involvement.

Bayraktar said energy facilities had been repeatedly targeted throughout

the conflict.

"We also know that Ukraine's energy infrastructure was a main target, and vice versa with Ukraine attacking some energy facilities in Russia," he said.

Turkey wants energy infrastructure to remain "out of this conflict," he said, adding: "We need to keep energy flows uninterrupted in the Black Sea, in our straits, as well as through the pipelines."

Ankara was implementing measures "against war-related maritime threats", a Turkish defence ministry source said yesterday.

"However, even if we minimise maritime threats and security chaos in the Black Sea through these measures, lasting peace is essential for a stable and secure maritime environment," the source added.

Russian President Vladimir Putin on Tuesday denounced the Ukrainian drone attacks as "piracy".

He warned Moscow would "expand the range of its strikes on Ukrainian ports and the ships that enter them", and if the attacks continued, it would "consider the possibility of retaliatory measures against ships of those countries that are helping Ukraine carry out these pirate operations."

"The most radical way would be to cut Ukraine off from the sea."



SM Ali's 97th birth anniversary

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Today is the 97th birth anniversary of Syed Mohammad Ali, founder editor-publisher of The Daily Star and a luminary in journalism of Bangladesh.

SM Ali made his way up from a cub reporter to one of the country's most brilliant editors over a career spanning 44 years. He also led the Press Institute of Bangladesh (PIB) as its chairman.

Educated in Kolkata, Dhaka and London, he was one of the few Asian journalists who stood out in regional journalism.

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Fishermen cast their nets in the Turag River near Bosila. The relocation of tanneries from the Rayer Bazar area to Savar has led to a decline in pollution levels in the capital's rivers, making them once again habitable for fish. The photo was taken recently. PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON

RAMPURA KILLINGS Frame charges against 4 accused Prosecution urges ICT-1

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The prosecution yesterday completed its hearing on charge framing and pleaded before the ICT-1 to charge four accused -- two former BGB officials who later returned to the army, and two police officers -- in a crimes against humanity case filed over the killing of 28 protesters during the July uprising in Rampura.

The prosecution brought six charges against the accused: Lt Col Mohammad Redowanul Islam, Maj Rafat Bin Alam Moon, former additional deputy commissioner Rashedul Islam, and former Rampura Police Station OC Mashiur Rahman.



The two former BGB officers were produced before the tribunal as the charges were read out. Two video clips were played in the courtroom, showing Redowanul firing shots while wounded protesters lay on the roads.

Chief Prosecutor Tajul Islam told the tribunal that, to sustain the Sheikh Hasina-led government through maximum force, authorities decided on July 17, 2024, to deploy the BGB at key entry points and strategic locations across Dhaka.

Following the order, BGB and police teams took positions in Rampura and Banasree on July 18, led by 5 BGB Commander Lt Col Rakibul Hasan and Deputy Commander Maj Rafat. Rakibul later left the scene for Pilkhana, handing over command to Rafat.

At the same time, 26 BGB Commander Lt Col Redowan, then Khilgaon Zone ADC Rashedul, and former Rampura Police Station OC Mashiur were in charge of nine BGB and six police platoons.

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Stay neutral, you have historic responsibilities

CA tells SPs at meeting on election; IGP instructs them to uphold professionalism

MOHAMMAD JAMIL KHAN

The field-level police officials have been directed to remain neutral and avoid aligning with any political party or candidate during the upcoming national elections.

They were also instructed not to accept any financial support from political candidates.

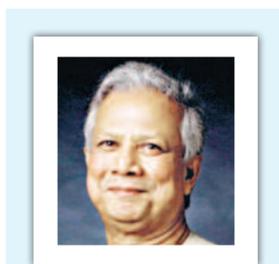
The superintendents of police (SPs) were reminded to treat the upcoming elections as a "historic responsibility" and work to ensure a smooth and credible election.

The instructions were delivered during two separate meetings: one with Chief Adviser Muhammad Yunus and another with Inspector General of Police (IGP) Baharul Alam.

The views-exchange meeting with Yunus was held in the morning at the Chief Adviser's Office in Tejgaon, while the second took place later that day at the Police Headquarters (PHQ) titled "Meeting on election matters with the Inspector General of Police".

During the closed-door meeting at the PHQ, Baharul emphasised that this election could bring about significant changes, as it involves a referendum alongside the national election to determine whether the parliament would transition to a bicameral system.

Baharul instructed the officers to uphold their professional duties and maintain impartiality, ensuring a fair and transparent electoral process.



This election is not an ordinary one -- it has come at the cost of the sacrifices made by those who were martyred in the July mass uprising.

PROF MUHAMMAD YUNUS
Chief Adviser

guidelines and ensure that cases involving police assaults are investigated without delay.

He also addressed allegations of money being collected for police clearances, stressing that such practices should cease and clearances should be issued properly.

The newly-appointed Gazipur district SP Md Sharif Uddin highlighted the importance of coordination among law enforcement officers, especially during crucial election-related incidents.

He pointed out the need to establish a clear structure for force movements in advance, ensuring officers are well-informed about their instructions on election day.

Sharif also emphasised the need to strengthen wireless communication to prevent any disruptions during the election. Cumilla SP Md Anisuzzaman suggested not to appoint any controversial individuals as presiding officers, while Joypurhat SP Mina Mahmud suggested that CCTV cameras should be installed where body-worn cameras are unavailable.

In response to the concerns, Baharul said that it would not be possible to ensure CCTV cameras at all polling centres.

Special Branch chief Golam Rasul instructed officers to avoid maintaining any personal relations

SEE PAGE 9 COL 6



Long-route buses and trucks struggle to enter the capital beneath the Jatrabari-Gulistan flyover due to an illegal leguna stand, causing heavy traffic and delaying commuters. The photo was taken in the Jatrabari area yesterday.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

Dhaka seeks to shape 'new canvas' in ties with Delhi

Says Bangladesh envoy to India

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh is trying to shape a "new canvas" in its relations with India, where both countries share a common future, said Bangladesh High Commissioner to India Riaz Hamidullah yesterday.

"It is easier said than done, but it is possible. We have divergent views and sensitive issues, but that is the nature of our relationship. Focusing on only one aspect would not do justice," he said at an interactive session organised by the Merchants' Chamber of Commerce and Industry in Kolkata.

Calling the relationship "organic," Riaz said both countries are growing fast, with economic engagement exceeding \$25 billion, including sectors like tourism.

He said Bangladesh has not restricted the mobility of Indian nationals and added that people-to-people connections continue to

SEE PAGE 9 COL 1

ACC probing 50 former, current cops over graft

DIPAN NANDY

The Anti-Corruption Commission is investigating allegations of bribery and corruption against at least 50 former and current police officials.

Over the past 15 years, multiple cases have been opened against officers at different levels -- from senior leadership to station-level constables.

ACC sources said after the recent exposure of massive graft by former IGP Benazir Ahmed, the commission filed cases against several senior officers, including former IGPs Benazir Ahmed and Nur Mohammad, former DMP commissioner Asaduzzaman Miah, and former DB chief Harun Or Rashid, for allegedly amassing illegal wealth.

ACC insiders said the officers under investigation -- described as loyal to the previous Awami League government -- now fear losing their jobs, facing lawsuits, arrests, and public criticism.

Investigators say the accused officers accumulated large amounts of illegal wealth through bribery, recruitment and posting trades, tender manipulation, interference in criminal cases, and what has become known as "arrest trading". Some senior officials are also accused of using excessive force and firing on protesters during the quota-reform movement.

So far, around a dozen cases -- including murder cases -- have been filed against top police officials, including a former IGP and a former DMP commissioner, along with dozens of others.

SEE PAGE 9 COL 1

Health assistants to continue demo Vaccination, services disrupted nationwide

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Health assistants have decided to continue their work abstention, stating that the authorities have failed to convince them that their demands, including amendments to their recruitment rules, will be addressed soon.

As a result, the vaccination of children and several other services across the country will remain halted for over a week.

Meanwhile, a group of Community Health Care Providers (CHCPs) continued their demonstration for the third consecutive day yesterday, demanding payment of their 17 months of arrears and permanent employment.

Consequently, services at 662 community clinics across the country have been disrupted.

Routine vaccination for children, registration of newborns, and several other services came to a near halt as several thousand health assistants began a sit-in at the Central Shaheed Minar on Saturday to push for their demands.

The sit-in, which began in front of the Director General of Health Services (DGHS) on Tuesday, continued yesterday.

Fazlul Haque Chowdhury, member secretary of the Bangladesh Health Assistant Association Central Coordination Council, said they had a meeting with DGHS Director (Admin) ABM Abu Hanif, who informed them that the necessary papers had already been sent to the public administration ministry.

However, the process has yet to begin, Fazlul added, explaining that district leaders recommended continuing the work abstention, and thus their programme will persist.

Yunus-led interim govt justified

SC upholds HC verdict

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Appellate Division of the Supreme Court yesterday upheld a High Court verdict that justified the formation and oath of current interim government led by Prof Muhammad Yunus under this court's opinion.

A seven-member bench headed by Chief Justice Syed Rezaat Ahmed unanimously dismissed a leave to appeal petition filed by Advocate Muhammad Mohsen Rashid challenging the HC verdict.

The apex court also issued an observation along with the order but did not disclose its contents. The observation will be known when the full text of the order will be released.

Advocate Mohammad Shishir Manir, an intervener of the case, told reporters at the SC premises that following the apex court order it has been established that the current government is formed on the basis of the sovereign will of the people.

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Three more die of dengue, 565 get hospitalised

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

At least three dengue patients died while 565 others were hospitalised in 24 hours till 8:00am yesterday.

According to the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS), among the deaths, two were reported from Dhaka South City Corporation (DSCC), while one was from Dhaka North City Corporation (DNCC) areas.

With the new deaths and cases, the total number of dengue-related deaths this year rose to 394, while total cases rose to 96,627. Currently, 1,835 dengue patients are undergoing treatment at different hospitals across the country.

3 buses burnt in Noakhali depot fire

UNB, Noakhali

Three buses were burnt after a fire broke out at the BRTC bus depot in Sonapur of Noakhali town early yesterday.

Md Arifur Rahman Tushar, manager of BRTC Sonapur, said the fire broke out at the bus depot around 2:30am.

On information, two firefighting units rushed to the spot and doused the blaze, said Farid Uddin, assistant director of Noakhali Fire Service and Civil Defence.

The fire completely burned down a double-decker bus of Noakhali Science and Technology University and damaged the upper portions of two other buses -- Gulbahar and Maloti -- at the depot, he said.



PHOTO: STAR

KALIRCHHARA CANAL CCC-WDB dispute halts excavation

SIFAYET ULLAH, City

The Chattogram City Corporation and Water Development Board are currently in a dispute over the demarcation of Kalirchhara canal in the port city's Akbarshah area.

This conflict has brought the ongoing re-excavation work to a complete halt.

The Kalirchhara canal, which stretches 5.5 kilometres from the hilly belt to the Bay of Bengal, once served as a major outlet for stormwater. However, over the past decade, the canal has suffered from significant encroachment.

A digital survey conducted last year by the WDB found 31 illegal structures along the canal's length, many of which are multi-storey buildings that have been constructed by filling up parts of the waterbody. Due to these constructions, the canal, which should be 25 to 30 feet wide according to land records, has narrowed considerably. In some areas, its width has been reduced to just 8 to 10 feet, making it resemble more of a drain than a

canal.

As a result, the canal has lost its capacity to drain stormwater to the sea, leading to severe waterlogging in nearby neighbourhoods.

The WDB launched a Tk 3.9 crore project to re-excavate 1.5 kilometres of the upstream and downstream areas and to clean

The Kalirchhara canal, which stretches 5.5 kilometres from the hilly belt to the Bay of Bengal, once served as a major outlet for stormwater. However, over the past decade, the canal has suffered from significant encroachment.

approximately 4 kilometres in total. Excavation work began recently at several points but came to a halt when the CCC objected to the boundary lines marked by WDB engineers at the North Lake City Housing segment, said Borna Hoque, sub-divisional engineer of

WDB Chattogram.

CCC, however, claimed that the WDB is working beyond its authorised boundary.

Nurul Islam of the CCC estate department said, "After the dispute arose, we measured the canal again using the revisional survey (RS) map and flagged the boundary on December 1. But WDB is trying to excavate beyond these points."

He said CCC had placed red flags to mark their version of the official boundary, which WDB did not accept.

"CCC's new demarcation does not match land office records. We are writing to the deputy commissioner to settle the matter," said Borna Hoque.

Meanwhile, locals have expressed frustration over the ongoing institutional conflict.

Mohammad Shafiqul Islam Khan, a journalist and resident of the area, said, "CCC never worked on this canal. A former ward councillor even filled up portions of it. Now when WDB wants to restore it, CCC is blocking the work."

Three women die as tractor falls on them while bathing 2 more die in other road accidents

STAR REPORT

Three women from a family were killed when a tractor fell on them after skidding off the Karikandi-Rajapur road while they were bathing in the Titas river in Cumilla yesterday.

The deceased were identified as Rina Akhter, 35, wife of Shukkor Ali; Rozina Akhter, 30, wife of Imon Mia; and Shamsun Nahar, 40, wife of Faruk Mia, said Sub-Inspector Halima Akhter of Titas Police Station.

Rozina and Shamsun Nahar were sisters-in-law, and Rina Akhter was their nephew's wife.

Police said they will take legal action once a complaint is filed. The driver is on the run.

Meanwhile, our Kishoreganj correspondent reported that Shamsul Haque, 59, a madrasa teacher, was killed after being hit by a microbus on the Mirzapur-Thanaarghat road.

Locals detained the microbus driver and handed him over to the police, said Pakundia Police Station OC Md Sakawat Hossain.

Our Panchagarh correspondent adds that an employee of the Atwary upazila administration died after being run over by a truck on the Karatoya Bridge while he was on his way to work on a motorbike. The deceased is Anarul Islam, 47, of Dokropara

Act now to protect women, children from trafficking

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a national event yesterday called for urgent, coordinated reforms to protect women and children from rising violence and trafficking.

They stressed the need to strengthen child protection, social services, the justice system, and prevention efforts.

The remarks were made during the launch of the report "Stopping the Traffic: Prevalence and Prevention of Trafficking of Women and Children in Bangladesh (2025)", jointly produced by the Government of Sweden and Unicef Bangladesh.

Launched by child protection advocates, government officials, and civil society representatives, the report provides key evidence and recommendations to guide national policies and coordinated action to protect vulnerable groups.

The report calls for scaling up a universal child protection system through a national case management system, child protection community

Launched by child protection advocates, government officials, and civil society representatives, the report provides key evidence and recommendations to guide national policies and coordinated action to protect vulnerable groups.

hubs, functional child welfare boards, protection committees, and counter trafficking committees in all districts. It also proposes linking birth registration with access to health, education, and social services.

To strengthen justice and accountability, it recommends increased resources for anti-trafficking tribunals, child-sensitive training for law enforcement and the judiciary, full implementation of the national referral mechanism, and compensation schemes for survivors.

The event featured a moderated discussion led by Natalie McCauley, chief of Child Protection at Unicef.

The panel included Fahima Kader, additional superintendent of police at PHQ; Mohd Sadiqul Haque, national project director of the CSPB Project at the Department of Social Services; Salma Ali, lawyer and rights activist; and Dr Sanzida Akhter, professor of Women and Gender Studies at Dhaka University.

Bangladesh Retired Government Employees Welfare Association
House: 75/A, Road: 5/A, Dhanmondi R/A, Dhaka-1209
Phone: 48122987, 222240189
E-mail: brgewa@gmail.com
www.brgewa.com

Request for Expression of Interest (EOI)

Bangladesh Retired Government Employees Welfare Association (BRGEWA) invited Expression of Interest from qualified **medical-based consulting firms** under **Lump-sum, Selection under a Fixed Budget (SFB)** for the following project:

"Establishment of a 12-Bedded Dialysis Center at BRGEWA Medical Consultancy and Diagnostic Center, Dhanmondi, Dhaka."

Source of funds: Ministry of Public Administration (MOPA)

TOR, RFA, and required forms are available at the BRGEWA office on working days from **10:00am-5:00pm until 23/12/2025**, and on the website

• For details please visit BRGEWA office and website: www.brgewa.com

EOI Submission Deadline: 24/12/2025, 12:30pm (BST).

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দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি
১ ইঞ্জিনিয়ার ব্যাটালিয়ন
চট্টগ্রাম সেনানিবাস

১। এতদ্বারা সর্বসাধারণের অবগতির জন্য জানানো যাচ্ছে যে, ১ ইঞ্জিনিয়ার ব্যাটালিয়ন, চট্টগ্রাম সেনানিবাস এর সার্বিক তত্ত্বাবধানে নিম্নবর্ণিত কাজ সম্পন্ন করা হবে। অগ্রাধী টিকাদার/ব্যবসায়ী প্রতিষ্ঠানসমূহের নিকট হতে নিম্নবর্ণিত কাজের দরপত্র আহ্বান করা যাচ্ছেঃ

ক্রমিক	কাজের বিবরণ	মন্তব্য
১	হাটহাজারী ফিল্ড ফ্যারিং রোডে ৩০০ জন সৈনিক এর জন্য অস্থায়ী বাসস্থান নির্মাণ এবং এতদসংক্রান্ত বিবিধ ব্যয় নির্বাহ্য বাবদ।	
২	সুষ্ঠু প্রশিক্ষণ নির্দিষ্টকক্ষে চট্টগ্রাম সেনানিবাসে জঙ্গল লেইন সুটিং রেস্ট নির্মাণ এবং এতদসংক্রান্ত বিবিধ প্রশিক্ষণ ব্যয় নির্বাহ্য বাবদ।	

২। দরপত্র গ্রহণে ইচ্ছুক টিকাদার/ব্যবসায়ী প্রতিষ্ঠানসমূহ আগামী ২২ ডিসেম্বর ২০২৫ তারিখের মধ্যে অধিনায়ক, ১ ইঞ্জিনিয়ার ব্যাটালিয়ন, চট্টগ্রাম সেনানিবাস হতে উল্লিখিত কাজের পৃথক পৃথক তফসিল অফিস চলাকালীন সময়ে সংগ্রহ করতে পারবেন।

৩। দরপত্র গ্রহণকারী টিকাদার/ব্যবসায়ী কর্তৃক দ্রব্য সামগ্রীর মূল্য নির্ধারণপূর্বক পরিকায় প্রকাশের পর হতে আগামী ২৩ ডিসেম্বর ২০২৫ তারিখ ১০০০ ঘটিকার মধ্যে ১ ইঞ্জিনিয়ার ব্যাটালিয়ন, চট্টগ্রাম সেনানিবাসের প্রধান কার্যালয়ে রক্ষিত টেন্ডার বাক্সে জমা দিতে হবে। উল্লেখ্য যে, উক্ত তারিখেই ১২০০ ঘটিকার উপস্থিত দরদাতাদের সম্মুখে ক্রয়ের পরিচালনা পর্যদ কর্তৃক দরপত্র খোলা হবে।

৪। উল্লিখিত কাজের বিল প্রচলিত বিধি মোতাবেক পরিশোধ করা হবে।

৫। টিকাদার/ব্যবসায়ী প্রতিষ্ঠানসমূহ কর্তৃক প্রচলিত হারে সংযোজন (VAT/IT) প্রদান করতে হবে।

৬। উল্লেখ্য যে, দ্রব্য সামগ্রী ক্রয়ের পরিচালনা পর্যদ কোন কারণ দর্শানো ব্যতিরেকে যে কোন দরপত্র গ্রহণ অথবা বাতিল করার ক্ষমতা সংরক্ষণ করে।

অধিনায়ক
১ ইঞ্জিনিয়ার ব্যাটালিয়ন
চট্টগ্রাম সেনানিবাস

আইএসপিআর/সেনা/৮১২
GD-2654

বাংলাদেশ নির্বাচন কমিশন
নির্বাচন কমিশন সচিবালয়

বিজ্ঞপ্তি

নং- ১৭.০০.০০০০.০২৫.৫০.০৯২.২৪ (অংশ) -৮৫২ তারিখঃ ০৪ ডিসেম্বর ২০২৫

রাজনৈতিক দল নিবন্ধন বিধিমালা, ২০০৮ এর বিধি ৭(২) এর অধীন বিজ্ঞপ্তি

এতদ্বারা সর্বসাধারণের অবগতির জন্য জানানো যাইতেছে যে, "জনতার দল" কে, ঠিকানা: বনানী হাইটস হাউজ-১৮ (৩য় তলা) রোড-৮, ব্লক-জি, বনানী, ঢাকা-১২১৩, Representation of the People Order, 1972 (PO No.155 of 1972) এর Chapter VIA এর আওতায় রাজনৈতিক দল হিসাবে নিবন্ধনের জন্য দলের চেয়ারম্যান ব্রিগেডিয়ার জেনারেল অব: মো: শামীম কামাল এবং মহাসচিব মোঃ আযম খান নির্বাচন কমিশনের নিকট একটি দরখাস্ত পেশ করিয়াছেন। উহাদের প্রার্থিত প্রতীক 'কলম'।

উক্ত রাজনৈতিক দলের নিবন্ধনের বিষয়ে কাহারও কোন আপত্তি থাকিলে প্রয়োজনীয় দলিলাদিসহ উহার কারণ উল্লেখপূর্বক ০৯ ডিসেম্বর ২০২৫ তারিখের মধ্যে নিম্নস্বাক্ষরকারীর নিকট লিখিতভাবে জানাইবার জন্য অনুরোধ করা হইল।

আখতার আহমেদ
সিনিয়র সচিব
নির্বাচন কমিশন সচিবালয়

GD-2664

বাংলাদেশ নির্বাচন কমিশন
নির্বাচন কমিশন সচিবালয়

বিজ্ঞপ্তি

নং- ১৭.০০.০০০০.০২৫.৫০.০৯২.২৪ (অংশ) -৮৫১ তারিখঃ ০৪ ডিসেম্বর ২০২৫

রাজনৈতিক দল নিবন্ধন বিধিমালা, ২০০৮ এর বিধি ৭(২) এর অধীন বিজ্ঞপ্তি

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উক্ত রাজনৈতিক দলের নিবন্ধনের বিষয়ে কাহারও কোন আপত্তি থাকিলে প্রয়োজনীয় দলিলাদিসহ উহার কারণ উল্লেখপূর্বক ০৯ ডিসেম্বর ২০২৫ তারিখের মধ্যে নিম্নস্বাক্ষরকারীর নিকট লিখিতভাবে জানাইবার জন্য অনুরোধ করা হইল।

আখতার আহমেদ
সিনিয়র সচিব
নির্বাচন কমিশন সচিবালয়

GD-2665

Push for peace, rebalance trade Macron urges Xi as the two leaders meet in Beijing

AGENCIES

French President Emmanuel Macron appealed to Xi Jinping to help end the war in Ukraine and to tackle trade deficits as the two leaders met in Beijing yesterday.

For Macron, making his fourth visit to China while in office, the three-day trip is an opportunity to shore up support for a ceasefire in Europe's deadliest conflict since WWII, as well as to attract more Chinese investment in France.



China -- a major Russian trading partner -- has said it takes a neutral stance on the war, refraining from condemning Moscow's invasion.

Yesterday, Xi reiterated his support for an end to the hostilities, telling Macron that "China supports all efforts committed to peace and hopes that all parties will reach a fair, lasting and binding peace agreement that is acceptable to all parties".

"No matter how the external environment changes, our two countries should always demonstrate the independence and strategic vision of major powers," Xi told Macron, adding that China remained committed to promoting peace in Ukraine and Gaza.

Path to peace in Ukraine unclear

Says Trump as US envoys prepare to meet Kyiv official

REUTERS, Washington

The path ahead for Ukraine peace talks is unclear, US President Donald Trump said on Wednesday, after what he called "reasonably good" talks between Russian President Vladimir Putin and US envoys.

The Kremlin said on Wednesday that Putin accepted some US proposals aimed at ending the war in Ukraine and was prepared to keep working to find a compromise.

US special envoy Steve Witkoff and Trump adviser and son-in-law Jared Kushner spent hours at the Kremlin, departing in the early hours of Wednesday morning with no specific breakthrough on ending the war.

Trump, speaking to reporters in the Oval Office, said Witkoff and Kushner briefed him about the talks via telephone and told him their impression from Putin was that "he would like to make a deal." What happens now, however, is unclear, Trump said.

A White House official said Witkoff and Kushner were due to meet with Ukrainian officials in Miami yesterday.



Israel committed war crimes in Gaza

Says UN chief; 7 Palestinians, including two children, killed in Israeli strikes

AGENCIES

There was something "fundamentally wrong" with how Israel conducted its military operation in the Gaza Strip and there are "strong reasons to believe" that war crimes have been committed, United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres told Reuters on Wednesday.

"I think there was something fundamentally wrong in the way this operation was conducted with total neglect in relation to the deaths of civilians and to the destruction of Gaza," Guterres said in an interview at the Reuters NEXT conference in New York.

"The objective was to destroy Hamas. Gaza is destroyed, but Hamas is not yet destroyed. So there is something fundamentally wrong with the way this is conducted," he told Reuters Editor-in-Chief Alessandra Galloni.

More than 70,000 people have been killed in Gaza, according to the enclave's health ministry, during the two-year-old conflict between Israel and Hamas.

When asked if war crimes had been committed, Guterres said: "There are strong reasons to believe that that possibility might be a reality."

He praised the United States - an ally of Israel - for being instrumental in improving aid access in Gaza, where a global hunger monitor said in August that famine had taken hold.

Meanwhile, an Israeli strike on Palestinian territory on Wednesday evening killed seven people including two children, Gaza's civil defence agency said.

The strike hit near the Kuwaiti field hospital in Khan Younis and "targeted" a shelter camp, reports Al Jazeera online.

WHO warns of increase in malaria cases and deaths

AFP, Geneva

Deaths linked to malaria last year rose last year, the World Health Organization said yesterday, warning also of an increase in cases and resistance to current treatment.

There were some 282 million cases and 610,000 deaths recorded worldwide in 2024 - slightly up on the previous 12 months - underlining the mosquito-borne disease as a continuing serious global health issue.

WHO chief Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus said the increase in deaths and cases, combined with funding cuts "threaten to roll back the progress we have made over the past two decades".

But he added: "None of these challenges is insurmountable. With the leadership of the most-affected countries and targeted investment, the vision of a malaria-free world remains achievable."

Africa remains by far the most-affected region, with 94 percent of cases and 95 percent of malaria deaths, the majority (75 percent) involving children under five.

Five countries - the Democratic Republic of Congo, Ethiopia, Mozambique, Nigeria and Uganda - account for more than half of the number of cases, the WHO said in a new report. But the global health agency said progress had still been made.

Since the WHO approved the first vaccines against malaria in 2021, 24 countries have introduced routine immunisation programmes.

Chemoprevention, which involves the use of medication to prevent infection during high-risk malaria seasons, is now being implemented in 20 countries, reaching 54 million children in 2024 - up from about 200,000 in 2021.

The WHO has now certified 47 countries and one territory as being exempt from malaria, including Cape Verde and Egypt in 2024, as well as Georgia, Suriname and East Timor in 2025.

Progress in the fight against malaria had already stalled in recent years, notably because of climate change, an increase in conflict and resistance to drugs and insecticides.

The WHO's director of malaria and neglected tropical diseases, Daniel Ngamije, said underfunding of malaria response programmes had exacerbated the challenges.

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Ministry of Women and Children Affairs
Supporting Implementation of the Mother and Child Benefit Programme (SIMCBP)
Probasi Kalyan Bhaban (12th floor), Eskaton Garden
Ramna, Dhaka-1000
www.simcbp-mowca.gov.bd

Memo no: নসি/সিএমসি/সি-০৫/৪১/২০২৫/১৫৬ Date: ০৪.১২.২০২৫

REQUEST FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST (CONSULTING SERVICES- INDIVIDUAL CONSULTANT)

The World Bank is supporting the Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh to achieve its vision on early childhood development to care, nurture, protect, respect, love, and cherish all children with utmost importance in order to build a strong foundation for their growth and development, through an IDA Credit for Bangladesh Enhancing Investments and Benefits for Early Years (BEIBEY) project. BEIBEY objectives are to provide consumption support to vulnerable households with pregnant women and mothers of children under 4 years and increase knowledge of nurturing care services that contribute to early childhood development.

1. Ministry/Division	: Ministry of Women and Children Affairs
2. Agency	: Ministry of Women and Children Affairs
3. Procuring Entity Name	: Bangladesh Enhancing Investments and Benefits for Early Years (BEIBEY) Project
4. Procuring Entity District	: Dhaka
5. EOI for selection of	: INDIVIDUAL CONSULTANT
6. EOI Ref No	: নসি/সিএমসি/সি-০৫/৪১/২০২৫/

Key Information

7. Procurement Method	: Open Competitive. (The consultant will be selected in accordance with the procedures set out in The World Bank Procurement Regulations for IPF Borrowers, July 2016 revised September 2025)
8. Budget Source & Funds	: Development Budget, IDA, Credit
9. Development Partner	: IDA, World Bank

Particular Information

10. Project Name	: "Bangladesh Enhancing Investments and Benefits for Early Years (BEIBEY) Project" Supporting Implementation of Mother and Child Benefit Programme.
11. EOI Closing Date	: Expressions of Interest must be submitted to the undersigned address by 3:00 PM on or before 21/12/25, in a sealed envelope clearly marked "Expression of Interest", contract Package number and position applied for. In addition to that soft copy of EOI will be required to be submitted through email to: pd.beibeysimcbp@gmail.com

12. Information for the applicant:

Contract Package No	Name of the Position with duration	No of positions	(a) Required Minimum Qualification; (b) Experience and (c) Scope of works & Job Responsibilities
BEIBEY-SIC-05	Training Specialist; 30 Months	1	<p>a) Education Qualification Post graduate degree in Communication, Advocacy, Mass Media, Business Administration, Education, Sociology, Social Welfare or any other related discipline from a reputed university</p> <p>b) Experience: A minimum of eight (8) years of progressively professional experience in similar role. At least five years' experience with government or donor funded programs. Proven experience and application of blended (offline & online) training cycle management, capacity building, and awareness building programs. Familiarity with early childhood development issues preferred. Excellent written and verbal communications skills in English and Bangla.</p> <p>C) Scope of works: Details of job responsibilities & scope of works are given in the TOR. The interested applicant is requested to download the TOR from the MOWCA website: (http://www.simcbp-mowca.gov.bd); (https://www.cptu.gov.bd)</p>
BEIBEY-SIC-08	Monitoring and Evaluation Specialist; 30 months	1	<p>a) Education Qualification Post-graduate degree in Sociology, Social Welfare, Economics, Public Health, Statistics or any other equivalent discipline from a reputed university in Bangladesh or abroad.</p> <p>Experience: At least 10 years of progressively professional experience in project/program monitoring and evaluation in Bangladesh or any other developing country including a minimum of 5 years' experience as M&E specialist in large scale government or donor-funded project/program; Previous experience of working with maternal and child health, nutrition and development program is desired. Proven ability to lead quantitative and qualitative research and reporting with large and complex data. Familiarity with Bangladesh Government process and procedures; Proven experience in participatory processes and data collection methods; Proven experience in use of qualitative and quantitative software for data analysis; Proven experience with mobile data collection platforms such as CommCare, Ona, Kobo ToolBox; Proven experience with conducting data analysis, reflection, translation and interpretation of data to assess progress, identify bottlenecks, and recommend strategic and policy actions; Skills in GIS systems (such as Arc GIS, QGIS) and database management (DBMS)/MIS would be an advantage; Substantial experience in capacity development, training, advising, coaching and mentoring; Proven understanding of data protection and confidentiality as part of data collection and management practices, and ability to respect and maintain confidentiality; Excellent written and verbal in Bangla and English writing and reporting.</p> <p>C) Scope of works: Details of job responsibilities & scope of works are given in the TOR. The interested applicant is requested to download the TOR from the MOWCA website: (http://www.simcbp-mowca.gov.bd); (https://www.cptu.gov.bd)</p>

The Applicants are invited to provide information in detail including their qualifications to perform the service (complete CV along with a description of the similar assignment, experience in similar position and conditions, general qualification, and financial proposal)

The client reserves the right to accept or reject any/all Expressions of Interest (EOI) or cancel the EOI process at any stage without assigning any reason whatsoever and without incurring any liability to the affected applicant(s).

TOR can be found at the following website: (<http://www.simcbp-mowca.gov.bd>); (<https://www.cptu.gov.bd>); further information in this regard could be obtained from the undersigned during office hours (9:00 AM to 5:00 PM BST).

(Dr. Prakash Kanti Chowdhury)
Project Director
Phone: +880 2 55100646
Email: pdbeibeysimcbp@gmail.com

GD-2559



UN warns of new atrocities in Sudan

Heavy fighting erupts between army, paramilitary forces in Kordofan region

AFP, Geneva

UN Human Rights commissioner Volker Turk said yesterday he fears new "atrocities" in Sudan amid intense fighting between the army and paramilitary forces in the battleground Kordofan region.

Fighting has intensified across the three states that make up Kordofan as the Sudanese army seeks to keep the rival Rapid Support Forces (RSF) and other groups away from a key road linking the capital Khartoum with the key Darfur region.

The UN human rights council has already mandated one inquiry into alleged atrocities after the RSF seized the Darfur city of El-Fasher following an 18-month siege. The war that erupted in April 2023 has left tens of thousands dead and forced 12 million people to flee their homes, according to aid agencies.

Turk made a new call for a ceasefire so aid can be sent into threatened towns and said he "feared another wave of atrocities in Sudan amid a surge in fierce fighting across the Kordofan region" between the Sudanese army, the RSF and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement-North (SPLM-N), according to a statement released by his office.

It added that since the RSF captured the Kordofan city of Bara on October 25, "the UN Human Rights Office has documented at least 269 civilian deaths from aerial strikes, artillery shelling, and summary executions."

It said toll was probably "much higher" as communications into the city was difficult. "There have also been reports of retaliatory killings, arbitrary detention, abductions, sexual violence and forced recruitment, including of children," Turk added. "It is truly shocking to see history repeating itself in Kordofan so soon after the horrific events in El Fasher," said Turk.

The statement highlighted a November 3 drone attack on a tent where mourners had gathered in El Obeid, North Kordofan, reportedly killing 45 people, mostly women. Another November 29 drone strike by the army in Kauda, South Kordofan "reportedly resulted in the deaths of at least 48 people.

Since RSF captured Kordofan city of Bara on October 25, UN rights office documented 269 deaths from aerial strikes and artillery shelling.

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গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার

প্রধান প্রকৌশলীর কার্যালয়
গণপূর্ত অধিদপ্তর, সেগুনবাগিচা, ঢাকা

তারিখ: ১৭ অগ্রহায়ণ ১৪৩২
০২ ডিসেম্বর ২০২৫

স্মারক নং-২৫.৩৬.০০০০.১১.১১.৪০২.২০২৫-৬৮৩

গ্রেড-১৪ হতে গ্রেড-২০ পর্যন্ত লিখিত পরীক্ষার বিজ্ঞপ্তি

সংশ্লিষ্ট সকলের অবগতির জন্য জানানো যাচ্ছে যে, গণপূর্ত অধিদপ্তরের অধীন সেট-আপস্কুল গ্রেড-১৪ হতে গ্রেড-২০ পর্যন্ত মোট ০৮ ক্যাটাগরির ৬৬৯টি শূন্য পদের সরাসরি জনবল নিয়োগের নির্দিষ্ট আধাশী ১২/১২/২০২৫ ও ১৩/১২/২০২৫ তারিখে ০৩ ক্যাটাগরির নিয়োগের লক্ষ্যে অনুষ্ঠিত MCQ টাইপ পরীক্ষার উত্তীর্ণদের এবং অবশিষ্ট ০৫ ক্যাটাগরির মোট ০৮ ক্যাটাগরির সর্বমোট ৬৬৯টি শূন্য পদের লিখিত পরীক্ষা নিম্নলিখিত সময়সূচি অনুযায়ী ঢাকা শহরের বিভিন্ন শিক্ষা প্রতিষ্ঠানে অনুষ্ঠিত হবে।

ক্রম	পদের নাম	শূন্য পদের সংখ্যা	পরীক্ষার তারিখ ও সময়
১	ট্রেনোটেইপিং কাম-কম্পিউটার অপারেটর	২৯	১৯ ডিসেম্বর, ২০২৫ শুক্রবার
২	নকশাকার	৪১	সকাল ১০.০০-১১.৩০ ঘটিকা
৩	কার্ভ সহকারী	১৪৪	
৪	অফিস সহকারী কাম-কম্পিউটার মুদ্রাক্ষরিক	৭৬	
৫	হিসাব সহকারী	১১৯	
৬	অফিস সহায়ক	১৬১	
৭	নিরাপত্তা গার্ড	৮১	১৯ ডিসেম্বর, ২০২৫ শুক্রবার
৮	মাদী	১৮	বিকাল ০৩.০০-০৪.০০ ঘটিকা

উক্ত লিখিত পরীক্ষার অংশগ্রহণের জন্য ক্রম নং ৪, ৫ ও ৬ এ বর্ণিত পদের ক্ষেত্রে MCQ পরীক্ষার প্রবেশপত্র লিখিত পরীক্ষার জন্য প্রয়োজ্য হবে। ক্রম নং ১, ২, ৩, ৭ ও ৮ পর্ব পরের ক্ষেত্রে <http://recruitment.pwd.gov.bd> ওয়েবসাইট হতে প্রবেশপত্র ডাউনলোড করার জন্য প্রার্থীদের মোবাইল নম্বরে SMS পঠানো হবে। প্রবেশপত্রটি লিখিত, বায়হরিক (প্রযোজ্য ক্ষেত্রে) ও মৌখিক পরীক্ষার জন্য প্রয়োজ্য হবে। প্রবেশপত্রটি সংরক্ষণ করতে হবে। প্রবেশপত্র পরীক্ষার তারিখ, সময় ও পরীক্ষাকেন্দ্রে উল্লেখ থাকবে। প্রার্থীকে অস্বাভাবিক প্রবেশপত্রের প্রিন্ট কপি পরীক্ষা কেন্দ্রে পরিদর্শককে প্রদর্শন করতে হবে। প্রবেশপত্র ব্যতীত পরীক্ষার অংশগ্রহণ করতে দেয়া হবে না। প্রার্থীদের যথাসময়ে উক্ত পরীক্ষার অংশগ্রহণ করার জন্য অসুস্থ করা হলে।

মুহাম্মদ সারওয়ার জাহান
তত্ত্বাবধায়ক প্রকৌশলী (সংস্থাপন)
ও সসসা সচিব
বিজ্ঞাপিত বাছাই, নিয়োগ ও পদোন্নতি কমিটি
গণপূর্ত অধিদপ্তর, ঢাকা

তারিখ: ০২/১২/২৫

The Daily Star

FOUNDER EDITOR: LATE S. M. ALI

Prevent pre-election violence at any cost

With murder rate spiking and many looted guns still missing, govt must deliver results

As the country hurtles towards a general election in February, the law and order situation continues to cause concerns. Reports about recent incidents such as the twin killings outside a judge's court in Khulna or the viral footage of a politician gunned down in a shop in Dhaka's Pallabi area—however isolated they may seem—contract the optimism of Home Adviser Jahangir Alam Chowdhury who insists that there is “no risk” of the security situation deteriorating before the polls. He claims the environment is “steadily improving” following the tumultuous ousting of the Awami League regime. This, however, remains at odds with the reported reality.

Data from the Centre for Governance Studies (CGS) suggests that the country is still reeling from that violent hangover. Firearms-related offences surged by 30 percent year-on-year in the first half of 2025. Police ledgers are equally dismal: in the past 15 months, 4,809 murder cases were filed nationwide, 3,236 of them in the first 10 months of this year, as this newspaper reported. That equates to more than 10 bodies a day. Further CGS data offers a slightly more nuanced, though hardly reassuring, view. The monthly average of murders fell to 322 in the first half of this year from 343 in the same period a year earlier. However, this is still a roughly 28 percent increase over the 2023 average.

The problem is threefold. First, the machinery of law enforcement remains brittle. The police force, having acted as the blunt instrument of the previous regime, collapsed in morale and efficacy following last year's uprising. They have yet to regain their footing. A police spokesperson admits that stopping targeted killings—often born of hyper-local grudges—is difficult. Second, during the chaos of the political changeover, many police stations were looted. More than 1,300 firearms remain missing, a floating arsenal now likely in the hands of the gangs and political muscle carving up turf in different localities. Rewards offered for their return have yielded little. Third, the political vacuum is being supplemented by old habits. With the election schedule looming, prospective candidates are not merely canvassing; they are battling for dominance, with reports indicating a sharp rise in intra-party clashes. Worse still, “top criminals,” released from prison or emboldened by the security void, are now being recruited to intimidate rivals.

The interim government is tasked with shepherding a democratic transition, but the terrain is being mined by political vendettas, factional feuds, and a resurgent underworld. Security analysts warn that without a focused crackdown, specifically the recovery of illegal arms and the re-arrest of resurgent criminals, the days to the upcoming polls will hardly be peaceful. The government has done relatively well to stabilise the economy. Now, it must secure the streets to make sure the path to the ballot box becomes peaceful.

Rising HIV cases concerning

Govt must increase tests, ensure proper preventive services at all levels

We are alarmed by the sharp increase in HIV infections in Bangladesh. The latest HIV/AIDS Situation Report 2025 reveals that 1,891 new infections were recorded between last November and this October, 453 more than the previous year. This is also the highest year-on-year increase since 2000. The fact that this surge occurred during a period when overall HIV testing actually declined by nearly two lakh is particularly concerning. When fewer tests produce more positive results, it suggests that transmission is increasing faster than expected, and that ongoing preventive measures are not sufficient. The report by the DGHS also shows that the proportion of HIV-positive individuals receiving treatment has fallen from 78 to 74 percent. Meanwhile, 18 percent of those potentially living with HIV remain unaware of their status, allowing the virus to spread silently.

The surge in cases is linked to several factors, according to health officials. While overall testing declined because fewer migrant workers were screened—dropping from 13.05 lakh last year to 10.11 lakh this year—testing among key populations, including people who inject drugs, sex workers, and transgender individuals, rose sharply, leading to more detections. This year, 1.17 lakh people from these groups were tested, compared to about 97,000 the previous year. These populations accounted for 56 percent of new cases, underscoring their vulnerability and the need for targeted services without any interruption. The surge also included 217 new cases among the Rohingyas.

Another likely factor is the expiry of a government programme, disrupting vital prevention services such as condom and needle distribution, which may have increased the threat for high-risk groups, although health officials say more research is needed to confirm its impact. Experts have also warned that late diagnosis and poor awareness are increasing HIV-related deaths in the country, with Chattogram emerging as particularly vulnerable.

The government, therefore, must take urgent action to reverse the current trends. It must strengthen prevention programmes while relying less on temporary donor-funded initiatives. This involves expanding screening, testing and treatment services across all districts of all vulnerable groups, including migrant workers, and improving coordination between relevant government agencies and community-based organisations. These organisations should be empowered to work closely with vulnerable groups. The national awareness campaigns must also be better designed to reach all segments of society. Addressing social stigma is equally important, as it prevents many from seeking timely testing and care.

The sharp rise in cases is a clear warning that Bangladesh risks falling behind in the global fight against HIV, so comprehensive action including ensuring sustainable funding, a coherent national strategy, and strong political commitment is essential.

The dream of an independent judiciary

It is near at hand, but can still slip away



THE THIRD VIEW

Mahfuz Anam
is the editor and publisher of
The Daily Star.

MAHFUZ ANAM

Nothing reveals the story of why we failed to institutionalise democracy in Bangladesh better than our failure to build an independent judiciary. Though it is clearly stated in our constitution, it took us 53 years or so to lay its final foundation stone. What edifice we will build on this foundation lies in our future.

With so many things we have criticised the interim government for, the separation of the judiciary is one area where it deserves our praise. Without a separate secretariat under the authority of the chief justice—for which an ordinance has been recently issued—the judiciary would never have come out of the dominance of the executive branch, and especially of the law ministry, which resulted in the total destruction of the legal system in the country. Thanks are due to Prof Yunus, the head of the government, and Asif Nazrul, the law adviser. Praise must also be extended to the current chief justice, whose relentless work behind the scenes brought about the present reality.

What must not be overlooked is that none of our democratically elected governments—led by Khaleda Zia and Sheikh Hasina—or the military governments of General Ziaur Rahman and General H M Ershad did anything to set up an independent judiciary.

Three events—one judgment (1999), one initiative by a caretaker government (Fakhruddin Ahmed, 2007), and another by the present interim government (Prof Yunus, 2025)—have finally removed all the legal hurdles and paved the way for the establishment of an independent judiciary.

In 1995, Md Masder Hussain, then a district judge, on behalf of 441 subordinate judges, lodged a petition challenging government control over recruitment, transfer, placement, promotion, etc of judges. On May 7, 1997, the High Court delivered a judgment with eight directives. The government appealed

So why did it take 53 years to do something so clearly spelt out in Part II of the constitution under the Fundamental Principles of State Policy, that “the State shall ensure the separation of the judiciary from the executive organs of the State”?

There are two basic reasons: first, our political culture of non-accountability and, second, a bureaucratic stranglehold that never allows the growth of independent institutions, especially those that can question their authority.

From the start, we favoured a powerful government and brought in a constitution in which the distribution of power among the three organs of the State—the legislature, judiciary, and executive—favoured the last. We misinterpreted Lincoln's dictum of a “government of the people, by the people and for the people” to

in governance that proved disastrous and found its ultimate expression under Sheikh Hasina.

The role of the Speaker was always that of a lackey rather than an independent manager of parliamentary proceedings. If we examine the type of individuals who were “appointed” as Speakers, it becomes clear that none had either the personality or the intention to uphold the interests of the House above those of the ruling party, and especially the prime minister. Most of them owed their positions to the PM—in the case of Shirin Sharmin, the last of them, she was not even an elected MP but a chosen one from the reserved seats for women—and hence they tended to serve the chief executive rather than the highest seat of law-making.

As for elected MPs, they rarely gave importance to the voters who elected them after the polls. Instead, their allegiance shifted almost entirely to the party that nominated them. This was due to the perks, development funds, and various executive powers that came only from the ruling party and government, and not from voters, resulting in further erosion of the legislature.

It was the judiciary that had some

of accused and, in many cases, arresting them without a shred of evidence have reduced the image of the judiciary to that of an extension of government. The judiciary may argue that these are abuses by law enforcement agencies and fall outside its purview. But when the misuse and abuse of the law denigrate the judiciary as a whole, should it not publicly condemn such practices or urge the government to stop them? The higher judiciary, especially the chief justice, can and should express such views. The moral and ethical values of their profession oblige this role.

The point we wish to emphasise is that even after all the rules are passed and judicial independence is formally guaranteed, its actual implementation will require moral courage from judges themselves. They must adhere to the spirit of dispensing justice, rather than just mechanically interpreting the law, and certainly not serving the executive branch or the “privileged accused.” Under various legal loopholes, cases remain pending for years. The misery this causes for the poor, ordinary people, and the amount of money and time they have to spend to appear at each hearing, seems to elicit little concern from our



FILE VISUAL: ANWAR SOHEL

An immediate test of the coming elected executive will be how quickly and faithfully it passes into law the elements of judicial independence that have so far been put in place through ordinances. We also expect that future MPs will demonstrate greater respect for their voters, and not merely engage in habitual genuflection to their party, especially to its chief.

and the Appellate Division delivered a historic verdict on December 2, 1999, outlining 12 directives. The judgment recommended the creation of a separate judicial service; establishment of a judicial service commission; separate service rules under Article 115 of the constitution; a judicial pay commission; financial and administrative autonomy to reduce executive interference in the judiciary, etc. This was, however, not followed through properly.

In 2007, during the caretaker government headed by former Bangladesh Bank governor Fakhruddin Ahmed, the long-awaited steps to set up the Judicial Service Commission, the judicial service rules, and the Judicial Pay Commission were taken. On November 1, 2007, the caretaker government formally separated the lower judiciary from the executive, as a major part of implementing the 1999 Appellate Division verdict. But the dream of a full separation remained elusive.

On November 30, 2025, the current government issued the Supreme Court Secretariat Ordinance, formally establishing a separate secretariat for the judiciary, the most vital of steps for an independent judiciary.

mean that as long as a government is elected, whatever it does reflects the “will” of the people and must therefore be allowed a free hand in running public affairs. In forming a powerful government, we missed the chance for an accountable one.

As for the legislative branch, from the very start, we did not allow it to evolve as an independent institution. It has always acted as a rubber stamp of the majority party in parliament. The fact that we never separated the role of the Leader of the House from that of the head of government—the prime minister—brought the House directly under the control of the latter.

First in Pakistan and later in Bangladesh, Quaid-e-Azam Mohammad Ali Jinnah and Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, founders of the two states respectively, chose to occupy the highest executive office. This made the legislature totally subservient to the head of government. In both Jinnah's and Mujib's cases, the same person held the positions of Leader of the House, head of the government, and head of their party. This did not provide the opportunity for the House to emerge with any real degree of independence. In Pakistan's case, Jinnah chose to be governor-general—the post that Lord Mountbatten had held—instead of being prime minister, as Nehru did in India, thus diminishing the prospect of the rise of a parliamentary system of government in Pakistan for which the struggles continue even today.

Mujib, on the other hand, opted to be prime minister—although he was president of the government-in-exile—and thereby shifted the focus to the elected House. However, he did not show the foresight to appoint a separate Leader of the House and a different party president. Combining the three posts—prime minister, leader of the House, and party chief—created a lethal convergence of power that inevitably led to centralisation

chance of keeping the executive accountable, and hence everything was done to clip its wings in every way possible. Here, the role of bureaucrats was critical. Not only did they act on their own to subvert the rise of an independent judiciary, but they also advised politicians that such an institution would pose a threat to the government's freedom to act.

There is also the fact that members of the judiciary itself, both at junior and higher levels, contributed to its subservience. There is not a single instance of a judge resigning in protest against the misuse of the justice system. On the contrary, several examples show that the judiciary, far from resisting, actually welcomed executive interference. Through denial of bail, jailing dissenters, permitting the misuse of remand, not questioning the merit of frivolous cases at the very outset, and not upholding an individual's right to liberty and protection from legal harassment, members of the judiciary often allowed the executive to flaunt its power and intimidate the people. They conveniently, and sometimes self-servingly, forgot that the law exists for justice. When its application compromises justice, a judge must opt for justice, not an interpretation that serves the government over citizens.

The law, for example, clearly states that only one case may be lodged for a particular crime, yet dozens—sometimes hundreds—were permitted. Why did the judiciary never question this? When denying bail, the court rarely seems to reflect on the fact that a person's liberty, guaranteed by the constitution, is being taken away. The misuse of remand barely enters a judge's mind. The handling of cases involving political opponents of past governments stands as the most shameful abdication of the courts' role. Regrettably, elements of this pattern remain even today, which we hope will soon cease.

The instances of naming hundreds

judges.

So, judges, especially those of the High Court and the Appellate Division, must always uphold the supremacy of the judiciary and never do anything that directly or indirectly denigrates this revered institution. We think the most shameful insult that the higher judiciary inflicted upon itself was when five Appellate Division judges stood on their knees instead of their feet in compliance with the wishes of the then prime minister to oust a sitting chief justice, SK Sinha. The reason? Because he refused, on constitutional grounds, to do what Sheikh Hasina wanted. Instead of standing with the chief justice, they declared that they would henceforth not work with him. The credibility and prestige of the Appellate Division stood shattered.

An immediate test of the coming elected executive will be how quickly and faithfully it passes into law the elements of judicial independence that have so far been put in place through ordinances. We also expect that future MPs will demonstrate greater respect for their voters, and not merely engage in habitual genuflection to their party, especially to its chief.

With the final guaranteeing of judicial independence, we hope this vital institution of modern civilisation will finally emerge with the glory and prestige it deserves by serving the people rather than the government of the day.

If the executive operates within its limits, the legislature—especially MPs—restrains itself to build a transparent and accountable governance framework instead of advancing partisan interests or chasing so-called development projects, and the judiciary truly distinguishes itself in the service of accountability and justice for all, especially the poor, then—and only then—will we have a real chance to build a genuine democracy in this beloved country of ours.

Dear mothers, stop coddling your sons



AASHA MEHREEN AMIN

NO STRINGS ATTACHED

Aasha Mehreen Amin is joint editor at The Daily Star.

Mothers are the epitome of sacrifice, the symbol of eternal kindness and the always-available emotional anchor. They will protect their children with their lives. Yet these same loving mothers (along with fathers) often end up raising the very men who grow into entitled, emotionally stunted adults. Patriarchy is not just perpetuated by men but by women conditioned by patriarchal values.

In societies such as ours, where male preference dominates every class, religion and neighbourhood, mothers unintentionally become collaborators of male exceptionalism. They raise boys who believe they are gifts from heaven, which wouldn't bother the rest of us women if we didn't have to live with them for the rest of our adult lives.

Disclaimer: Yes, there are those rare, absolutely lovely men who genuinely believe women are their equals, who will fight for our rights with other men, happily take care of the baby and cook dinner without feeling emasculated and well, basically, who seem almost too good to be true. Most likely, it was their mothers who drilled into their heads that respect is non-negotiable—"or else no supper, no TV, no video games." But these men are the exceptions.

Let's talk about the majority of men. From the moment a boy is born, the royal treatment begins. Just like in the UNICEF cartoon show *Meena*, which exposes the blatant bias towards sons, the boys get the choicest food, the nicer toys, and the best opportunities available. Girls, on the other hand, are trained, gently but firmly, to give up things for their brothers, to take care of them, and consider their needs more important than their own. And it is the mothers who play a big role in establishing



VISUAL: ARWIN SHAMS SIDDIQUEE

these rules from the very beginning.

By the time boys reach adulthood, many mothers have held them so tightly in the grip of affection that it borders on emotional smothering. This makes the recipient used to being the sunshine of the household, unwilling to accept anything less than

premium treatment, regardless of his own behaviour.

When the son marries, the dynamics shift quite dramatically. The same gentle, self-sacrificing, doting mother can transform into a territorial hawk. She devotes her energies to save her son from the inept, unfit female she must call her daughter-in-law. Trying to prove that her daughter-in-

stock". Meanwhile, these mothers continue to pour their adoration on their sons like the thickest rabri (cream concentrated from unbelievable amounts of milk). The son must have the head of the fish, the juice from fifty pomegranates and the eggs of the hilsa—basically the best of everything. This will also extend to the grandsons, but never the daughter-in-law. Because males are born

But why do women do this? Why do they perpetuate this absurd sense of male entitlement that turns so many men into selfish, insensitive, boorish beings?

Because this is what they have seen all their lives. Boys as kings, girls as helpers. Sons as legacy; daughters as support staff.

Unfortunately, religious norms are interpreted through the same patriarchal cultural context. Everything reinforces the idea that men are inherently superior.

And so, the cycle continues.

A boy who always gets his way and is never taught compassion or accountability grows into a man who expects the same treatment from the world. When he doesn't get it, disappointment quickly turns into frustration, anger, and sometimes even violence.

Contrary to popular belief, raising a boy is harder than raising a girl. Because society already places the boy on a pedestal. So, how do we teach him how to climb down?

For starters, mothers must recognise that they are their sons' first teachers and arguably the most influential ones. This means teaching boys from childhood that girls are equal in value and deserve equal respect. Mothers must hold their sons to the same behavioural standards as daughters. They must expect their sons to have empathy, responsibility and generosity, and not make excuses for them when they are being selfish, arrogant and rude.

And when the son grows up and marries, mothers must swallow that instinct to cling and be territorial. Instead of searching for faults in the daughter-in-law, they can actively look for reasons to praise her, support her, and make her feel welcome. Instead of serving the son the biggest portion, they might ask the daughter-in-law what her favourite dish is.

These small shifts matter and can change the way men behave towards women, including their mothers, whom many take for granted.

Because if mothers keep showering sons with unquestioned indulgence, they risk raising men who believe the world owes them the same level of devotion and lash out when it doesn't. If we want decent men, we must start by raising decent boys.

Trump's Venezuela problem is not about cocaine, but oil



IRTISHAD AHMAD

Irtishad Ahmad is professor emeritus at the College of Engineering and Computing in Florida International University, US.

Since the beginning of September, the US military struck several boats in the Caribbean Sea and Pacific Ocean, alleging these were "drug boats" carrying cocaine into the United States. So far, there have been 21 strikes killing more than 80 civilians.

Venezuela has been designated a narco-terrorist state by the Trump administration to justify these attacks. Venezuela's President Nicolás Maduro has been accused of establishing "cocaine factories" in his country and of allegedly supplying drugs trafficked into the US.

Ridiculously, the White House spokesperson claimed that these attacks are being carried out in "self-defence" to save American lives!

There is no originality in this sort of rhetorical hyperbole from the US administrations. In 1983, under the Reagan administration, when Grenada was attacked, it was the "communism factory" the administration was trying to eradicate!

The rhetorics are familiar and the goals are obvious. The script is very similar to what happened when Panama's ruler, Manuel Noriega, was taken down in 1989 under President George H W Bush. Noriega was also accused of drug trafficking. The real US goal was to have greater control over the Panama Canal administration.

Maduro has been labelled by the US as the leader of the *Cartel de los Soles*, dubbed a foreign terrorist organisation. In August 2025, the US government increased the reward offer up to \$50 million for information leading to the arrest and/or conviction of Maduro.

The history of US invasions—"intervention" being the preferred US term—in Latin America is as frequent as it is widely varied. The justifying propaganda behind each encounter is as unimaginative as they are ridiculous. The ploys, in most cases, are to establish "democracy" by overthrowing

authoritarian regimes. The underlying reasons in almost all instances are anything but! As we are seeing today, the saga continues! Contexts are diverse, pretexts are alike!

Thus, what we are witnessing in Venezuela in recent months is nothing new. The history of US control in Latin America is replete with propaganda spewed by the US administrations and their paid agents in the media.

Venezuela, an oil-rich country in Latin America, has become

Venezuela, an oil-rich country in Latin America, has become US's headache since 1998 when a bold nationalist leader named Hugo Chavez assumed power. He nationalised the oil industry in addition to implementing a socialist land reform programme. As a result, it drew the ire of the US. Under Chavez, Venezuela made tremendous progress in reducing poverty (by as much as 15 percent) and increasing GDP.

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As seen time and again, history repeats itself too often in Latin America. The US administration did everything possible to make Chavez's government a failure, eventually staging a CIA-instigated coup in 2002. The coup failed within two days despite backing

from the CIA as Chavez's supporters gathered and stormed the presidential palace, Miraflores, and demanded his immediate release. After that, he stayed in charge until his death from cancer in 2013.

His Vice President Nicolás Maduro became the president and hung on to power despite many insurmountable challenges since then. The challenges he is facing were primarily conjured up by the US administrations in the form of diplomatic pressures and economic sanctions. Since they are not producing the intended results, the US government under Trump is now pushing for the military option. Attacks on boats are just the beginning. The pressure tactics appear to be part of a sinister campaign by the Trump administration to orchestrate a regime change in Venezuela by removing President Maduro from power and replacing him with the newly minted Nobel Laureate Maria Corina Machado. The goal is to establish US control over Venezuela's oil and to re-establish the elite class of which Maria Machado is a "poster child."

America's "problem" is Venezuela's vast reserves of oil. US's interest is to gain a strong grip on that resource. With 303 billion barrels (estimated as of 2023) of oil, Venezuela has the largest reserves in the world. But the country's export in 2023 was only \$4.05 billion as compared to \$181 billion of Saudi Arabia during the same year. Venezuela used to be one of the major sources of foreign oil to the US during the late 1990s and early 2000s. However, during Chavez's regime production fell due to his government's nationalisation policies and other socialist measures. Subsequent US sanctions worsened the situation further and Venezuela's oil production and export suffered a drastic reduction. Production grew to some extent in 2024 and early 2025, with output exceeding close to a million barrels per day in February 2025.

Recently, however, to the dismay of Trump administration, China has become the primary importer of Venezuelan oil. About 84 percent of total exports in September (2025) went to China, by direct or indirect means (via third parties) despite US-imposed sanctions.

The staggering amount of oil exports to China from Venezuela suggests a major

shift in the geopolitical scenario. China's increasing influence in Latin America, exemplified by this statistic, is undeniable. China extended \$62.5 billion in loans to Venezuela over the last three decades and is now Venezuela's biggest creditor. Of course, the US is concerned and is taking measures to thwart China's advances in the hemisphere. Washington looks at the

emerging strong ties, both economic and ideological (socialist), between Venezuela and China with suspicion and concern.

Obviously, the strategic relation between these two countries across the two continents is hard for the US to swallow. Previous administrations sought to counter China by trade and investment, but Trump, in his second term, is keen on pursuing a military

"solution" to America's "Venezuela problem." With roughly 10,000 troops, eight naval warships, two B-52 aircraft, and MQ-9 Reaper drones, deployed in the Caribbean in recent months, there are reasons to believe that the Trump administration has a broader and long term plan and its scope goes beyond Venezuela to strengthen the US control in the region.

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Director
Institute of Business Administration
University of Dhaka

'10 e 10': Shibu hopes to disrupt the music industry

"I released this song in April, but it didn't make much of a splash. Then, on October 10; 10-10-25—people started making Reels that day and calling it '10 e 10' Day," Shibu explained.

RAKSHANDA RAHMAN MISHA

If you've been scrolling through Instagram or TikTok lately, you've probably seen everyone sharing Reels or dancing to **10 e 10**. It's everywhere! But do you know how it went so viral?

Shehab Shahariar, also known as Shibu—the upstart musician behind the song—shared how it all happened. "I was on a bus, heading home from university, when Hania Aamir posted my song. By the time I got home, I had 50 Instagram requests—something that had never happened to me before!"

"I released this song in April, but it didn't make much of a splash. Then, on October 10; 10-10-25—people started making Reels that day and calling it '10 e 10' Day," Shibu explained.

Talking about the inspiration behind the track, he shared, "At the beginning of this year, I weighed 114 kgs and was really struggling with my weight. I felt insecure, and a lot of people disrespected me. One day I woke up and realised I needed to completely change my life. That's when I wrote **10 e 10**. It was my way of encouraging the audience to never think badly about themselves. No matter what, you're always '10 e 10'. I just had to change myself first because I wasn't comfortable with that version of me. Since then, I've lost almost 30 kgs."

Shibu now enjoys a massive following on Spotify, with almost 90 thousand followers.

"A lot of people listen outside Bangladesh. In Bangladesh, I have about 36 percent listeners. I actually have a bigger global fanbase compared to my Bangladeshi listeners. People from the US, Canada, many NRIs (Non-Resident Bangladeshis), and recently Pakistan, India, and Nepal are also loving my music."

His latest song, **Tauba**, has also been trending. "I made the beat for **Tauba** back in 2024. I sampled parts from Arfin Rume's **Sohena Jatona**—the harmonium, guitar, and mandolin portions—and the beat turned out pretty nice. After the success of **10 e 10**, I was confident it would work—and it's blooming now."

Up next, Shibu will perform at Arka Fashion Week alongside Muza on December 7 at 8:15pm. The singer, who first made his mark with pop, is now shifting his focus toward folk fusion and hopes to introduce the style to a wider audience. The first track from his upcoming album, **Opekkha**, has already been released, and more songs are on the way, with one set to drop later this month.



'The Family Man' Season 3 becomes Prime Video India's most-watched series of 2025

The Family Man Season 3 has become Prime Video India's most-watched title of 2025, reaching 96 per cent of pincodes within its first week.

The new season, which began streaming on November 21, also posted the franchise's strongest opening yet and is trending in the top 5 in more than 35 countries, including the UK, UAE, Canada, Australia, Singapore and Malaysia.

Creators Raj Nidimoru and Krishna Dasarakothapalli said the response shows the series' deep connection with audiences. The season features Manoj Bajpayee, Priyamani and Sharif Hashmi, with Jaideep Ahlawat and Nimrat Kaur joining the cast.

WHAT'S THE HAPS?

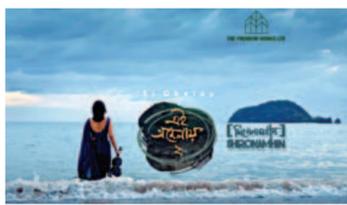
'The Merchants Trail'

This curated walk dives into the river born soul of Dhaka, unfolding hidden courtyards, Mughal relics, lost merchant quarters, and streets still humming with centuries of trade. It offers a rare, intimate glimpse into a city shaped by the Buriganga—where history, architecture, and lived culture collide in vivid detail.

DATE: FRIDAY | DEC 5, 2025
TIME: 8:30AM- 2PM
VENUE: PURAN DHAKA



PHOTO: SHEIKH MEHEDI MORSHED



Shironamhin drops much-anticipated track 'Ei Obelay 2'

Popular band Shironamhin released **Ei Obelay 2** yesterday, unveiling both Bangla and English versions of the sequel to their 2019 hit **Ei Obelay**. The track closes the band's new album **Batighor** and premiered on their official YouTube channel. The English version is titled **Remember Me**.

Band leader Ziaur Rahman wrote the sequel and said listeners had long requested a follow-up. Drummer Kazi Ahmed Shafin directed the music video, with Resh Rahman providing the English translation.

The video was filmed across Ko Kham, Ko Mak and Ko Chang in Thailand, featuring television presenter Neel Hurerzahan. The Premium Homes Limited supported the production. Both versions are now available.

NEWS

Digital Bangladesh vision

FROM PAGE 12
proposed in more than 40 direct project proposals reveals procurement anomalies exceeding Tk 1,000 crore, driven by unnecessary equipment proposed repeatedly for procurement without operational needs and under specified technical requirements, the report said.

Direct evidence of overpricing is also found with instances of equipment acquired at up to 2-4 times the global market value.

Connectivity projects increased dependence on private monopolies, creating public-funded networks operated through private hands and fragmented donor systems, weakening state control over core infrastructure.

The investigation found that key initiatives, including Aspire

to Innovate (a2i), were built on promotional metrics rather than verifiable outcomes.

The programme's reputation as an innovation lab relied heavily on publications and potential efficiency claims, while actual performance data remained limited.

A dual-governance system allowed UNDP-affiliated consultants substantial influence over procurement and programme design, shielding decisions from domestic accountability.

Education-focused programmes such as the Sheikh Russel Digital Lab (SRDL) and School of Future showed widespread non-functionality, it said.

Many labs lacked maintenance, equipment or connectivity and school selection showed clear political bias.

Independent assessments detected no measurable improvement in student outcomes that can be attributed to SRDL.

Urban digital projects, including the Digital Sylhet City Project, collapsed under political patronage, procurement capture and administrative gaps.

Wi-Fi coverage reached less than 5 percent of intended beneficiaries and no agency assumed operational responsibility.

Nine major projects showed breaches of fiduciary duty, misclassified procurement and weak data governance.

Fulfilling the original promise of Digital Bangladesh requires restoring the integrity of the institutions responsible for its delivery, the report added.

Pry teachers suspend strike

FROM PAGE 12
In this regard, the Directorate of Primary Education issued an order last night. The order, signed by Mahfuza Khatun, assistant director (policy and operations), said the transfer was made against a vacant post for administrative reasons.

Sharing a document on a Facebook post, Shamsuddin claimed that 41 more teachers were transferred "for taking part in their protest".

Many assistant teachers of government primary schools were absent for the fourth consecutive day yesterday. The strike disrupted annual exams nationwide.

What began as a work stoppage on Monday escalated into a fully fledged shutdown by Wednesday, as teachers pressed for pay scale upgrades and promotions. Their refusal to return to exam duties despite repeated ministry orders left thousands of students in limbo.

While some schools yesterday managed to hold exams with support from headteachers, office staff,

and guardians, many others have suspended them.

At Chonkanada Primary School in Jamalpur Sadar upazila, exams were conducted only after the upazila nirbahi officer and guardians broke the locks on classroom doors. In Mymensingh, similar interventions were seen as guardians and officials stepped in to ensure the tests were held.

In Barishal's Muladi upazila, demonstrating teachers locked the gate of a school. The upazila education officer later broke the lock at Muladi Model Government Primary School.

In Rajshahi, Ashraf Islam, assistant district primary education officer, said tests were not held at 25 schools of Bagmara upazila, as headteachers came under pressure during the strike. "Arrangements are being made to hold the exams on Sunday."

Mohiuddin Ahmed, Sylhet divisional director, said exams were held at all 5,054 primary schools,

though some faced difficulties as teachers tried to bar them.

In Narayanganj, District Primary Education Officer Ferdouse Begum said exams were conducted at all 547 schools in five upazilas. She said teachers boycotting duties had been reported to higher authorities.

Earlier, Convener Shamsuddin told The Daily Star that the primary education ministry had called for a meeting with Secretary Abu Taher Md Masud Rana, but it has yet to take place. "Without discussion or the fulfilment of our demands, we will continue our movement."

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 percent departmental promotion to headteacher posts.

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

HC delivers split verdict on DP world deal

FROM PAGE 12
The government can continue the current proceedings regarding the NCT in Chattogram following the verdict, Haque added.

Meanwhile, the writ petitioners' lawyers Ahsanul Karim and Kamal told reporters that the government cannot award a contract to DP World for container handling operations at NCT until the writ's final disposal.

Following the writ's filing by Bangladesh Jubo Arthanitibid Forum, a philanthropic organisation, another HC bench on July 30 issued a rule asking the authorities concerned to explain why the process for awarding the NCT's container

handling contract to DP World without holding any open tender should not be declared illegal.

The HC bench of Justice Fatema Najib and Justice Fatema Anwar recently concluded hearing on the rule and fixed yesterday for delivering the verdict.

Senior lawyers Zainul Abedin, Barrister AM Mahub Uddin, Advocate Ahsanul Karim and Barrister Kamal, assisted by Barrister Md Anwar Hossen, appeared for the writ petitioners, while Attorney General Md Asaduzzaman and Additional Attorney General Haque represented the state during the hearing of the rule.

3-year-old boy

FROM PAGE 12
Kushwaha's father Siddharth Singh called his son's achievement "a matter of great pride and honour", Indian media quoted him as saying. "We want him to become a grandmaster."

Kushwaha defeated three rated players in events across his state and other parts of the country to secure his record-breaking status.

India is a stable of chess grandmasters and has produced top stars including latest world champion Gukesh Dommaraju and five-time World Cup winner Viswanathan Anand.

Putin in India

FROM PAGE 12
"very happy" to be meeting "my friend" Modi.

"The range of our cooperation with India is huge," he said.

Modi hosted Putin for a private dinner yesterday evening, followed by a summit meeting today.

Beyond defence, trade relations are expected to feature prominently as India walks a diplomatic tightrope. Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said talks to expand the supply of Russia's advanced S-400 air defence systems had an "important place on the agenda".

Indian media reports suggested Moscow may also offer co-production of Russia's Su-57 fighter jets.

ICT issues arrest warrant against Joy

FROM PAGE 12
political leaders, former ministers, advisers, an Appellate Division judge, and a former secretary of the previous government.

They have now been charged with specific offences, removing them from that case.

Prosecutors brought three charges against Joy and Palak.

Charge-1 alleges that on the night of July 14-15, 2024, Palak, acting with Joy's approval, posted three provocative Facebook statuses branding student protesters as "razakars," and incited police, Chhatra League members and armed cadres to attack peaceful demonstrators at Dhaka University and elsewhere.

More than 1,400 protesters were killed and over 25,000 injured during the uprising.

Charge-2 accuses Joy of ordering Palak to shut down internet services to conceal the atrocities. Palak is alleged to have slowed and then blocked mobile and broadband networks, disabling apps such as Facebook, TikTok, and WhatsApp.

The blackout cut off protesters' communication, forced reliance on

traceable SIM cards that facilitated block raids and arrests. It coincided with armed raids, drone surveillance, and helicopter gunfire that left 26 people dead.

The prosecution states, "The plan to shut down the internet originated with Sajeeb Wazed Joy, who consulted his mother, Sheikh Hasina, before making the decision. Accused Zunaid Ahmed Palak then carried out the shutdown."

Charge-3 alleges that on August 5, during the "March to Dhaka," Joy and Palak directed security forces and ruling party cadres to open fire on demonstrators in Uttara, killing 32 people and injuring dozens.

CHARGES AGAINST ANISUL, SALMAN

The second case alleges that Anisul and Salman held a phone conversation during the uprising, in which they said protesters should be "finished off" slapping a curfew. Based on this alleged conversation, indiscriminate shooting of students took place in Dhaka and other districts on and after July 20, prosecutors said.

Another allegation says that on July 22, 2024, Salman led a group

of businesspeople to a meeting with Hasina at the then Gono Bhaban, where he urged her to continue the crackdown, assuring her that the business community stood by her "even at the cost of their lives".

Prosecutors say these actions amounted to incitement, assistance, and active participation in crimes against humanity.

An additional charge accuses Anisul of overseeing the filing of 286 "false cases" against some 4,50,000 student protesters, leading to illegal arrests and custodial torture.

Prosecutor Gazi Monwar Hossain Tamim told the tribunal that a recorded phone call from August 5 last year between Salman and Hasina's sister Sheikh Rehana purportedly shows Rehana asking Salman to "listen to what Joy says".

He further claimed that Hasina initially refused to resign despite pressure from police and army officials but changed her mind only after speaking to Joy.

Prosecutors say these elements establish Joy's advisory role and his involvement in decisions linked to the alleged crimes.

SM Ali's 97th birth anniversary

FROM PAGE 3
Ali was born in a well-known family in Sylhet in 1928. He was the eldest son of the late Syed Mustafa Ali, an official of the Assam Civil Service and nephew of famous litterateur Syed Mujtaba Ali.

in Pakistan, Hong Kong, Thailand and Singapore. He was the managing director of The Hong Kong Standard and The Bangkok Post. He joined the Press Foundation of Asia as its executive director in the 1970s. In the mid-80s, he became Unesco's regional communications adviser for Asia and the Pacific, based in the Malaysian capital of Kuala Lumpur.

He co-founded The Daily Star in 1991 and worked tirelessly to establish it as a leading national daily. He injected new life into the moribund English language journalism of the period. SM Ali was always keen to share his professional experiences with young aspirants who wanted to make a career in journalism. He is respected by all as the most successful Bangladeshi journalist at the regional and international level.

Frame charges

FROM PAGE 3
Investigation findings show Redowan, with the support of the other accused, ordered BGB and police to fire SMGs, Chinese rifles, and shotguns at unarmed protesters. He also fired his own SMG. A total of 28 people were killed and 16 seriously injured that day. It was prima facie proven that fugitive Redowan committed crimes against humanity under the ICT Act by directly supervising, giving orders to subordinates, creating opportunities, aiding and abetting, and through his subordinates and himself committing torture and murder, not preventing such crimes from being committed, failing to take action against the perpetrators, and encouraging the murders, Tajul said.

The charges are as follows: Charge 1 - attempted murder of Mehedi Alam near the BTV building, leaving him critically injured, and the killing of Gangacharan Rajbongshi near Rampura Bridge Wasa station. Charge

2 - shooting dead Mamun Mia and five others near Better Life Hospital, Wapda Road and Rampura Bazaar; attempted murder of Kawsar Hossain. Charge 3 - killing Mostafa Zaman Samudra and five others near Delta Care Hospital, Multi Care Hospital, Molla Tower, Ekaramunna School lane, and Mokkhi Mosque lane; attempted murder of Liaquat Hossain and four others. Charge 4 - killing Rakib Hossain and critically injuring Uzzal Hossain near Aftabnagar, Zahurul Islam City entrance. Charge 5 - killing Taufiqul Islam Bhuiyan and another person in front of Brac University, Progoti Swarani. Charge 6 - killing Russel Mia and 11 others in the Banasree residential area; attempted murder of Masum Ahmed and eight others.

As the defence lawyer for the two army officers and the state defence counsel for the two absconding former police officials submitted discharge petitions, the tribunal fixed December 14 to hear the petitions.

Stay neutral, you have historic responsibilities

FROM PAGE 3
with others and to ensure proper security at high-risk polling centres. Also at the meeting, AKM Shahidur Rahman, director-general of the Rab, instructed officers not to accept money from candidates. Shahidur also recommended that no incentives be provided from PHQ, as had been done in previous elections. He called for better coordination with district commissioners and local authorities, emphasising that such collaboration would facilitate smoother operations during the election period.

DMP Commissioner SM Sazzat Ali provided an example, quoting an ambassador, "He said that he has heard of vote rigging elsewhere. But he has never heard of rigging being done in the early hours of the day." Earlier in the morning, Chief Adviser Yunus said, "This election is not an

ordinary one - it has come at the cost of the sacrifices made by those who were martyred in the July mass uprising. We dreamed of a new Bangladesh through the mass uprising. Through the upcoming election, we will move towards realising that dream." Yunus said a referendum will be held alongside the general election, which will serve as the foundation for building the future of Bangladesh.

"Through the referendum, we will lay a new foundation that will guide this nation forward for the next hundred years." Yunus instructed the SPs to conduct the election in a manner that would present it as an exemplary process to the world, noting that many international delegations and election observers would be monitoring the elections. "We have all witnessed elections in the past. Some have called them

mock elections; others have described them as fraudulent and farcical. We must rise above that and establish a new standard." Yunus stressed the need for officials to be proactive and creative in ensuring a free and fair election. "Not everything can be written down on paper. While performing your duties, think about how the work can be done even better." Bringing about this change is a major responsibility of the police force, he said.

Yunus also proposed organising competitions among police members at the district or divisional levels to improve performance and boost enthusiasm, with prizes for outstanding work. Home Affairs Adviser Md Jahangir Alam Chowdhury, Special Assistant to the Chief Adviser Md Khuda Baksh Chowdhury, Home Ministry Secretary Nasimul Gani and Baharul also attended the meeting.

Dhaka seeks to shape 'new canvas' in ties with Delhi

FROM PAGE 3
anchor the relationship. "I qualify this as mutual interdependence," he said. Riaz also mentioned plans for a Bangla film festival in New Delhi next year and

suggested arranging tours for Indians to visit ancestral homes in Bangladesh. With Dhaka focusing more on cultural diplomacy, tourism facilitation, and broader

economic integration, the envoy said Bangladesh is signalling a clear intent to expand engagement as both countries navigate a sensitive phase in bilateral ties.

ACC probing 50 former, current cops

FROM PAGE 3
The ACC's list of officials under investigation includes former IGP Chowdhury Abdullah Al-Mamun; former DMP commissioners Shafiqul Islam and Khandaker Faruq Hossain; former PBI chief Banaj Kumar Majumder; former Special Branch chief Monirul Islam; Additional IG YM

Belalur Rahman; Industrial Police chief Mahbubur Rahman; former Rab director general Harun Or Rashid; former CID chief Mohammad Ali Miah; Additional IG Devdas Bhattacharya; Khandaker Lutful Kabir; former Chattogram Metropolitan Police commissioner Krishna Pada Roy; Tourist Police Additional IG

Meer Rezaul Alam; PHQ Additional IG Anwar Hossain; DMP Additional Commissioners AKM Hafiz Akter and Mahid Uddin; former Rangpur Range DIG Abdul Baten; retired CID DIG Sheikh Nazmul Alam; former Rangpur Range commissioner Md Moniruzzaman; PHQ DIG Joydeb Bhattacharjee; DMP CTTC chief Md

Asaduzzaman; DMP Joint Commissioner Biplob Kumar Sarker; and Subrata Kumar Halder. On Wednesday, the ACC confirmed that it is also investigating Jahangir Alam, additional deputy commissioner of Dhaka Metropolitan Police, and Mahabub Hossain, former assistant inspector general of the Special Branch.

After a meeting at the ACC office the same day, IGP Baharul Alam said corruption within the police is a complex problem and "cannot be solved overnight". ACC Deputy Director Aktarul Islam said the commission is committed to investigating police corruption and illegal assets of government officials.

ACC Deputy Director Aktarul Islam said the commission is committed to investigating police corruption and illegal assets of government officials.

POWER GRID BANGLADESH PLC
Design, Supply, Installation, Testing & Commissioning of 132/33 kV AIS Substation at Paikgacha and 132/33 kV AIS Substation at Mathbaria including associated 132KV bay extension at Sathkhira 132/33kV grid substation & at Bhandaria 132/33kV grid substation on turnkey basis (Package-3) (OCB NO. POWERGRID/ADB/PTSIREP/Package-3)

PRAYER TIMING
DECEMBER 5
Fazr Juma Asr Maghrib Esha
AZAN 5-15 12-30 3-45 5-19 7-00
JAMAAT 5-50 1-15 4-00 5-22 7-30
SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

চট্টগ্রাম প্রকৌশল ও প্রযুক্তি বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়
চট্টগ্রাম-৪৩৪৯

লেভেল-১ স্নাতক কোর্স এ ভর্তি বিজ্ঞপ্তি (শিক্ষাবর্ষ ২০২৫-২৬)
সি.নং. ১১৩৩/২৫
সি.নং. ১১৩৩/২৫
সি.নং. ১১৩৩/২৫

১। চট্টগ্রাম প্রকৌশল ও প্রযুক্তি বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ের নিম্নবর্ণিত বিভাগসমূহে লেভেল-১ স্নাতক কোর্স (শিক্ষাবর্ষ ২০২৫-২৬) এ ভর্তি হতে প্রার্থীদের নিকট থেকে আবেদন আহ্বান করা যাচ্ছে।
২। ভর্তি পরীক্ষার অংশগ্রহণের জন্য আবেদনের যোগ্যতা:
(ক) প্রার্থীকে অবশ্যই বাংলাদেশের নাগরিক হতে হবে।
(খ) প্রার্থীকে বাংলাদেশের যে কোন মাধ্যমিক ও উচ্চ মাধ্যমিক শিক্ষা বোর্ড/কারিগরি শিক্ষা বোর্ড থেকে ২০২৫ইং অথবা ২০২৩ইং সালের মাধ্যমিক বা সমমানের পরীক্ষার কমান্ডে সিজিপি ৪.০০ অথবা সমতুল্য গ্রেড পেয়ে উত্তীর্ণ হতে হবে।
(গ) প্রার্থীকে বাংলাদেশের যে কোন মাধ্যমিক ও উচ্চ মাধ্যমিক শিক্ষা বোর্ড/কারিগরি শিক্ষা বোর্ড থেকে ২০২৫ইং সালে অনুষ্ঠিত উচ্চ মাধ্যমিক/আলিম/সমমানের পরীক্ষায় উত্তীর্ণ হতে হবে। প্রার্থীকে গণিত, পদার্থবিজ্ঞান ও রসায়ন বিষয়ে মোট গ্রেড পয়েন্ট কমান্ডে ১৪.০০ এবং ইংরেজী বিষয়ে কমান্ডে 'B' গ্রেড পেতে হবে। ইংরেজী অর্ন্ত/বিশেষী শিক্ষা বোর্ড থেকে সমমানের পরীক্ষায় উত্তীর্ণ প্রার্থীকে উচ্চ বিদ্যালয়সমূহে সমতুল্য গ্রেড পেতে হবে। এছাড়া ব্যারোমেট্রিক্যাল ইঞ্জিনিয়ারিং বিভাগে ভর্তি হতে সর্বশ্রেষ্ঠ প্রার্থীকে উচ্চ মাধ্যমিক ও উচ্চ মাধ্যমিক পরীক্ষার জীববিজ্ঞানে কমান্ডে গ্রেড পয়েন্ট ৪.০০ পেতে হবে।
(ঘ) প্রার্থীকে GCE 'O' এবং GCE 'A' লেভেল উত্তীর্ণ হতে ভর্তি পরীক্ষার অংশগ্রহণের জন্য GCE 'O' লেভেল পরীক্ষার গণিত, পদার্থবিজ্ঞান, রসায়ন ও ইংরেজী বিষয়ে আলাদাভাবে 'A' গ্রেড পেতে হবে। প্রার্থীকে ২০২৪ইং সালের নভেম্বর বা তার পরে GCE 'A' লেভেল সার্টিফিকেট প্রাপ্ত হতে হবে এবং GCE 'A' লেভেল পরীক্ষার পদার্থবিজ্ঞান, রসায়ন ও গণিত বিষয়ে আলাদাভাবে 'A' গ্রেড পেতে হবে। এছাড়া ব্যারোমেট্রিক্যাল ইঞ্জিনিয়ারিং বিভাগে ভর্তি হতে সর্বশ্রেষ্ঠ প্রার্থীকে GCE 'A' লেভেল পরীক্ষার জীববিজ্ঞানে কমান্ডে 'B' গ্রেড পেতে হবে।
(ঙ) প্রার্থীকে কমান্ডে ১২ শিক্ষাবর্ষ অধ্যয়নকারী বাধ্যতামূলক শিক্ষার্থীদের থেকে ২০২৫ইং সালের উচ্চ মাধ্যমিক/সমমানের পরীক্ষায় গণিত, পদার্থবিজ্ঞান, রসায়ন ও ইংরেজী বিষয়ে গ্রেডক্যাটতে আলাদাভাবে কমান্ডে ৮-১০ নম্বর বা সমমানের গ্রেড পেতে হবে। প্রার্থীকে মাধ্যমিক/সমমানের পরীক্ষায় গণিত কমান্ডে ৭০% বা সমমানের গ্রেড পেতে হবে।
(চ) নির্দিষ্ট সময়ের মধ্যে অনলাইনে প্রাপ্ত আবেদনপত্রের মধ্য থেকে উচ্চ মাধ্যমিক বা সমমানের পরীক্ষায় গণিত, পদার্থবিজ্ঞান, রসায়ন এবং ইংরেজী এই চার বিষয়ে মোট গ্রেড পয়েন্টের ভিত্তিতে একটি মেধাতালিকা তৈরি করা হবে। গ্রেড পয়েন্ট একই হলে পর্যায়ক্রমে পদার্থবিজ্ঞান, রসায়ন ও গণিতের মোট নম্বর, পদার্থবিজ্ঞান ও রসায়নের মোট নম্বর, পদার্থবিজ্ঞানের নম্বর এবং রসায়নের নম্বরের ভিত্তিতে মেধাতালিকা নির্ধারণ করা হবে। এই মেধাতালিকা হতে প্রথম ১৬,০০০ (ষোল হাজার) যোগ্য প্রার্থীদের ভর্তি পরীক্ষার অংশগ্রহণের সুযোগ দেয়া হবে। তবে ১৬,০০০ (ষোল হাজার) তম সর্বক প্রার্থী ভর্তি পরীক্ষার অংশগ্রহণের সুযোগ পাবে।
(ছ) ন্যূনতম যোগ্যতা পূরণ সাপেক্ষে GCE 'O' লেভেল/GCE 'A' লেভেল এবং সংশ্লিষ্ট আবেদন জমা সর্বক সঠিক আবেদনকারী ভর্তি পরীক্ষার অংশগ্রহণের জন্য যোগ্য বলে বিবেচিত হবে।

৩। আবেদন করার পদ্ধতি:
ভর্তি পরীক্ষার ওয়েবসাইট (https://admissioncuet.ac.bd) এ প্রদত্ত নির্দেশনা মোতাবেক অনলাইনে আবেদন ফর্ম পূরণ ও ভর্তি পরীক্ষার ফি (সার্টিফ চার্জ বাদে) প্রদান করে আবেদন Submit করতে হবে।

ক্রম "ক" ইঞ্জিনিয়ারিং বিভাগসমূহ এবং নগর ও অঞ্চল পরিকল্পনা বিভাগ ১২০০/- (এক হাজার দুইশত) টাকা
ক্রম "খ" ইঞ্জিনিয়ারিং বিভাগসমূহ, নগর ও অঞ্চল পরিকল্পনা বিভাগ এবং স্থাপত্য বিভাগ ১৪০০/- (এক হাজার চারশত) টাকা

৪। পরীক্ষা এবং ভর্তি সপ্তর্ষি তারিখ ও সময়সীমা:
(ক) অনলাইনে আবেদনপত্র গ্রহণ শুরু ১৫ ডিসেম্বর ২০২৫ইং, সোমবার, সকাল ০৯:০০ ঘটিকা থেকে
(খ) অনলাইনে আবেদনপত্র গ্রহণ শেষ ৩১ ডিসেম্বর ২০২৫ইং, বুধবার, রাত ১১:৫৯ ঘটিকা পর্যন্ত
(গ) অনলাইনে আবেদন ফি প্রদান শেষ ০১ জানুয়ারী ২০২৬ইং, বুধবার, রাত ১১:৫৯ ঘটিকা পর্যন্ত
(ঘ) ভর্তি পরীক্ষার অংশগ্রহণের যোগ্য প্রার্থীদের রোল নম্বর ও নামের তালিকা প্রকাশ ০১ জানুয়ারী ২০২৬ইং, মঙ্গলবার
(ঙ) প্রবেশপত্র ডাউনলোড শুরু ১২ জানুয়ারী ২০২৬ইং, সোমবার, সকাল ১০:০০ ঘটিকা থেকে
(চ) পরীক্ষা কেন্দ্র চূড়ান্ত কা্যপালন ও চট্টগ্রাম শহর
(ছ) ভর্তি পরীক্ষার তারিখ ও সময়:
ক্রম "ক" গণিত, পদার্থবিজ্ঞান, রসায়ন এবং ইংরেজী মোট নম্বর ৫০০
ক্রম "খ" গণিত, পদার্থবিজ্ঞান, রসায়ন এবং ইংরেজী মোট নম্বর ৭০০
০১ জানুয়ারী ২০২৬ইং তারিখ (শনিবার) সকাল ১০:০০ ঘটিকা থেকে দুপুর ১২:৩০ ঘটিকা
১৭ জানুয়ারী ২০২৬ইং তারিখ (শনিবার) সকাল ১০:০০ ঘটিকা থেকে দুপুর ১২:৩০ ঘটিকা
১৭ জানুয়ারী ২০২৬ইং তারিখ (শনিবার) সকাল ১০:০০ ঘটিকা থেকে দুপুর ১২:৩০ ঘটিকা
১৭ জানুয়ারী ২০২৬ইং তারিখ (শনিবার) দুপুর ১২:৪৫ ঘটিকা থেকে দুপুর ১:৪৫ ঘটিকা

৫। বিশেষী শিক্ষার্থীদের ভর্তি প্রক্রিয়া:
ভর্তি পরীক্ষার অংশগ্রহণের জন্য বিশেষী শিক্ষার্থীদের কর্তৃক প্রার্থী নীতিমালা, তথ্যাদি এবং নির্দেশিকা www.cuet.ac.bd/fsc এ পাওয়া যাবে। নির্দেশিকা অনুসরণপূর্বক আবেদন করতে হবে। এছাড়াও পঞ্চপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকারের পররাষ্ট্র মন্ত্রণালয় ও শিক্ষা মন্ত্রণালয়ের মাধ্যমে আবেদন করা যাবে। আবেদনপত্রসমূহ ১৫ এপ্রিল ২০২৬ইং তারিখের মধ্যে চট্টগ্রাম প্রকৌশল ও প্রযুক্তি বিশ্ববিদ্যালয় (চট্টগ্রাম) এ পৌঁছাতে হবে।

- নির্ধারিত তারিখ ও সময়ের মধ্যে যে কোন সময় অনলাইন পদ্ধতিতে আবেদন করা যাবে। ০১ ডিসেম্বর ২০২৫ইং, বুধবার, রাত ১১:৫৯ ঘটিকা পর অনলাইনে আবেদন গ্রহণ করা যাবে না।
এরপর আর কোনো আবেদনপত্র Submit করা যাবে না।
একবার অনলাইন পদ্ধতিতে আবেদন করলে কোন ধরনের পরিবর্তন কিংবা তা প্রত্যাহার করা যাবে না এবং পরিবর্তন বা প্রত্যাহারের জন্য কোন টাকা ফেরত দেয়া হবে না।
অনলাইনে আবেদন ফি পরিশোধ অথবা আবেদন সফলতার সমস্যা হলে নিম্নলিখিত মোবাইল নম্বরসমূহে (সকাল ১০:০০টা থেকে বিকাল ৪:০০টা) এবং admission.support@cuet.ac.bd ই-মেইলে যোগাযোগ করা যেতে পারে।
আবেদন ফি পরিশোধ সফলতার SSL Helpline: ১৬৪৪৪, bKash: ১৬২৪৭, ০১৭৮১৪২৬৩২২
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আবেদন বাবদ রফতানি ছবি অবশ্যই ০৩ (তিন) মাসের বেশি পুরাতন হওয়া যাবে না।
প্রবেশপত্র ছাড়া কাউকে ভর্তি পরীক্ষায় অংশগ্রহণ করতে দেয়া হবে না।
MCQ পরীক্ষায় প্রতিটি ভুল উত্তরের জন্য মোট গ্রেড নম্বর থেকে সর্বশ্রেষ্ঠ গ্রেডসমূহের জন্য বরাদ্দ নম্বরের ২৫% কাটা হবে।
OMR Sheet এ একই প্রশ্নের উত্তরে একাধিক বৃত্ত ভরাট করলে ভুল উত্তর বলে গণ্য হবে।
OMR Sheet এ ভুল কালো ক্রয়িত বৃত্ত পয়েন্ট কমানোর মাধ্যমে বৃত্ত ভরাট করা যাবে। বৃত্ত ভরাটের জন্য পেনসিল, রোল পেন বা কাউন্টেন পেন ব্যবহার করা যাবে না। মুদ্রিত অঙ্কনের জন্য পেনসিল ব্যবহার করা যেতে পারে।
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ভর্তি বিজ্ঞপ্তি/ভর্তি নির্দেশিকা উল্লেখ্য যে, ভর্তি পরীক্ষায় এমন কোন তথ্য জানতে হবে উপরে উল্লিখিত মোবাইল নম্বর যোগাযোগ করতে হবে।
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e-Tender Notice

This is online tender, where only e-Tender will be accepted in the National e-GP Portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted for the procuring of following goods.

Table with 6 columns: Sl., Name of procurement, Tender ID No., Package No., Last selling date & time, Closing & opening date & time. Includes items like Medical Equipment, Office Equipment, Computers and Accessories, Chemical, Other Stationary, Computer consumables, Medical & Surgical Equipment Supplies, Books and Periodicals, Cleaning and Washing Items.

- To submit e-Tender, registration in the National e-GP System Portal (https://www.eprocure.gov.bd) is required.
Detail about the tender have shown in e-Tender Notice and e-Tender document. Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP help desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd).
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Professor Dr. Jobaida Sultana
Principal
Shaheed Tajuddin Ahmad Medical College
Gazipur
Telephone: 0224423306
E-mail: stamc@ac.dghs.gov.bd
GD-2560

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LAW OPINION

Can an approver be punished?



According to media sources, the Chief Prosecutor of the Tribunal said that it is within the exclusive jurisdiction of the tribunal to pardon him if a full and true disclosure of the crime is made through his testimony or make any other order. The conditions for such pardon outlined in the law are that it has to be i) full (not partial), ii) true (not fabricated) disclosure about the iii) whole (not in part) of the circumstances by the approver.

RAISUL SOURAV

The International Crimes Tribunal (ICT)-1 has recently delivered the first verdict concerning the crimes against humanity committed during the July uprising. One of the three accused and subsequently considered as an approver in this case was Ex Inspector General of Police (IGP) Chowdhury Abdullah Al-Mamun, who was eventually sentenced to five years in prison upon conviction.

Chowdhury Abdullah Al-Mamun's sentence has since been an issue of public and intellectual discussion. A report in the Prothom Alo says that the family members of the July uprising martyrs are unhappy with the lenient punishment of only five years in prison that he received, and demanded that he be sentenced to at least life imprisonment. On the other hand, some within the legal community seem to believe that the law requires him to be acquitted.

Section 15 of the International Crimes (Tribunals) Act (ICTA) 1973 deals with the provision of 'approver' although the Act does not provide its definition, and the term is used as rather a heading/marginal note to the mentioned section. It mentions that at any stage of trial, the tribunal

may tender a pardon to an approver. Similarly, the Code of Criminal Procedure (CrPC) 1898 neither defines nor uses the term, but it is usually applied to a person, supposed to be directly or indirectly concerned in or privy to an offence, to whom pardon is granted under section 337 of the Code with a view to securing his testimony against other persons guilty of the offence. In cases in which a pardon is tendered under the CrPC, the intended approver should always be clearly informed of the extent of the pardon offered to him; it should be explained to him that he is being tendered pardon and will be prosecuted in respect of such and such a case, and no others. Former police chief Chowdhury is the first person declared as approver under the Act, and perhaps this is why his lenient penalty has stirred debates.

As per media reports, during the charge hearing, the tribunal asked him whether he was guilty or innocent. At that time, the former IGP pleaded guilty saying, "I plead guilty. I am willing to voluntarily disclose the truth and details of all the circumstances related to the case". Consequently, the tribunal granted his plea and went on to treat him as an approver for the case. Since then, being turned into a prosecution

witness, he has provided crucial evidence. The vital legal question then arose whether a prosecution witness, who was an accused in the case, should be awarded a harsh sentence or be acquitted if the conditions are fulfilled.

According to media sources, the Chief Prosecutor of the Tribunal said that it is within the exclusive jurisdiction of the tribunal to pardon him if a full and true disclosure of the crime is made through his testimony or make any other order. The conditions for such pardon outlined in the law are i) full (not partial), ii) true (not fabricated) disclosure about the iii) whole (not in part) of the circumstances by the approver.

In this case, the ICT pronounced that the former Police Chief's role/contribution/confession/cooperation in proving the charges in the case as an approver was taken into consideration, which indicates that he, in the court's view, fulfilled the conditions. Because of that, he has been awarded a punishment lesser than that of his co-accused; notably, the tribunal convicted Sheikh Hasina, Asaduzzaman Khan and Chowdhury Mamun for instigation, incitement, issuing orders to mass killing, offences under superior command responsibility, and joint

criminal enterprise.

Another question is whether there is any exception when the tribunal can inflict punishment on the approver. The answer is that if the approver does not fulfil the above conditions, then the pardon will be revoked. In that case, the approver can be tried for the original offence for which s/he was pardoned, and his/her own confession/statement given as part of the pardon process can be used against him/her in that trial. Moreover, punishment can also be awarded if the approver is found to have committed a different crime, not covered by the pardon. Hence, the pardon offered under section 15 of the ICTA does not provide blanket immunity for all criminal activities of the approver.

The complexity does not end here. Now the question is, what does the word *pardon* mean as used in the law? Does it mean acquittal or a lesser punishment than what should have been given? It requires an interpretation from the court to avoid confusion. Notably, section 26 of the ICTA has an overriding effect over all other laws, including the CrPC and the Evidence Act of the country.

Nonetheless, if we scrutinise the international criminal law jurisprudence, then we will see Article 65 of the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court provides a framework. It mentions that for proceedings on an admission of guilt, the tribunal is not bound by the admission and must satisfy itself that the accused understands the nature and consequences of the admission; the admission is made voluntarily after sufficient consultation with the defense counsel; and such admission is supported by the facts of the case, based on the charges, any evidence presented by the prosecutor, and any other materials presented by the accused.

Nevertheless, it is clear in the Rome Statute that the accused remains an accused and does not turn into a prosecution witness, and the Chamber may convict the accused even if the accused satisfies the above requirements. Hence, in my view, there is no scope for a predetermined or lenient sentence for an admission under Article 78. In addition, the Guidelines for Agreements Regarding Admission of Guilt adopted by the ICC heavily emphasise the Court's independent duty to establish the truth. Judges must examine not just the agreement between the parties, but also other evidence presented by the prosecutor and any other relevant evidence, which can include victim representations and other sources, to ensure that the facts

are complete.

In contrast, the statutes and rules of the International Criminal Tribunals for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY) and Rwanda (ICTR) contained provisions for formal plea agreements under Rules 62 of the ICTY and 62 of the ICTR. An accused could plead guilty to specific charges, often after negotiations with the prosecutor, who might agree to drop other counts or recommend a sentence. However, the Trial Chamber is not bound by the agreement. Judges have to verify that the plea was voluntary, informed, and unequivocal and that a sufficient factual basis for the crimes existed. In such cases, a convicted person received a sentence determined by the judges, with a guilty plea being a significant mitigating factor, often leading to a substantially reduced term.

To understand the issue of pardon in international criminal jurisprudence, we should further consider that the primary goals of international criminal law and tribunals are not just to punish, but to establish a historical record of atrocities, promote reconciliation, deter future crimes, whereas a unilateral pardon could undermine these goals by appearing to offer impunity. Sentences are meant to reflect an individual's guilt and the gravity of the crime, while a pardon would circumvent this carefully calibrated judicial process. Hence, in my view, for someone such as Chowdhury, who was a superior as the police chief, a complete pardon or acquittal would be incompatible with the core principle of individual criminal responsibility for international atrocities, which seeks to eliminate impunity.

Now the question is, was he punished without getting the opportunity for a fair trial? How can a prosecution witness be punished without violating the conditions? Or did he get a chance to call witnesses on his behalf? Did he get a chance to cross examine the witnesses brought against him? Or was he sentenced based on the guilt pleaded at the beginning of the trial?

Although there remains confusions about these issues, it is clear that despite repeated attempts and amendments, there still are ambiguities, vagueness and loopholes in our ICTA, and the law has not yet reached international standards. Due to these legal uncertainties and weaknesses, there is a renewed opportunity to critique the trial process and the punishment received by Chowdhury Abdullah Al-Mamun.

The writer is Doctoral Researcher in Law at the University of Galway, Republic of Ireland.

LAW LETTER

Navigating our case backlogs and some proposals for reform

'Justice delayed is justice denied' - the aphorism has become a lived reality for many Bangladeshi victims. Our courts are groaning under a mounting backlog; by the end of 2024, roughly 4.5 million cases were pending across the judiciary, with well over 3.8 million cases in the lower courts alone.

This ballooning docket is not merely an abstract administrative problem. Pendency corrodes the rule of law: victims wait years for hearings, witnesses disappear, or their memories fade, evidence grows stale, and the incentive to settle outside court, sometimes under coercion, rises. For the disadvantaged, protracted litigation is effectively a denial of remedy. The backlog also imposes enormous economic and emotional costs on litigants and saps public confidence in institutions meant to protect rights.

Hence, the question remains why are the cases piling up. First, Bangladesh suffers from a chronic shortage of judges in the judiciary. In fact, Bangladesh has one of the lowest judge-to-population ratios in the region. Courts often have to cope with vacancies and heavy dockets. Similarly, sessions courts and district benches face acute staff shortages that make timely hearings impossible. Recent reports also show persistent year-on-year growth in pending cases at the High Court Division and Appellate Division.

Second, there is acute procedural inertia. Many aspects of the Code of Criminal Procedure (CrPC) 1898 and Code of Civil Procedure (CPC) 1908, some dating from the colonial era, still govern our courts. Repeated adjournments, remands, and other procedural loopholes lengthen trials. Academic and policy studies often single out archaic procedures and weak case management as core drivers of delay.

Third, weak or delayed investigation means that prosecutors and the defence

face evidentiary gaps at trial. That problem is especially stark in serious crimes (rape, homicide) where investigations require forensic capacity that the system often lacks. The result is frequent acquittals, referrals for further enquiry, or protracted retrials that multiply court work. Lack of witness protection measures or delays in preparing the charge-sheets also prolong the trial process.

Also, corruption also obstructs access to justice. Transparency International Bangladesh's national household surveys and related reports show that interactions with law enforcement and judicial services are often tainted by bribery and informal payments. When citizens perceive the path to justice as costly or corrupt, they either abandon their claims or seek extra-legal resolutions, which further clog the system and erode rights.

In order to offset the situation, certain reforms must take place. Case management measures, which the Law Commission had time and again proposed, should be implemented. Instead of article-level

Since convictions depend on timely and credible investigations, the government should prioritise establishing regional forensic labs, fast-tracking the police training on preservation of evidence, and creating protocols that limit otherwise needless remands. Investing in mobile forensic units and specialist prosecution teams for complex crimes would shorten the investigation-to-trial pipeline.



commitments, the state should set and publish times as disposition targets for different categories of cases and establish an independent monitoring mechanism to report progress.

Additionally, judicial strength should be enhanced through the recruitment of more judges, magistrates and court staff. At the same time, digital case-tracking systems, remote hearings for routine interlocutory matters, and stricter rules on adjournments should be enacted. Digital docketing reduces duplication and makes bottlenecks visible to policymakers and the public. Several jurisdictions have shown that digital case-management units at the court level dramatically reduce adjournments, and

Bangladesh may pilot the same.

Furthermore, since convictions depend on timely and credible investigations, the government should prioritise establishing regional forensic labs, fast-tracking the police training on preservation of evidence, and creating protocols that limit otherwise needless remands. Investing in mobile forensic units and specialist prosecution teams for complex crimes would shorten the investigation-to-trial pipeline. Notably, fear of reprisal is key reason why witnesses disappear and victims withdraw from prosecutions. Hence, robust witness-protection mechanisms, backed by budgetary commitments, must be adopted. And finally, anti-corruption safeguards,

clearer fee structures, public online tracking of case progress, and independent grievance mechanisms can restore confidence and reduce extra-legal settlements that mask systemic failure.

In conclusion, the reforms will require both political will and resources. Yet reforms can also save money. Delayed justice perpetuates uncertainty that deters investment, inflates transaction costs, and raises social instability. A court system that disposes of its cases promptly protects not only individual rights but also social order and economic activity.

Maymuna Mizan
Student of law at Bangladesh University of Professionals.

16 DAYS OF ACTIVISM

Digital abuse silently haunts female athletes

As part of the 16 Days of Activism relating to the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women, which began on November 25, The Daily Star Sports turns the spotlight on the digital ordeals faced by women in Bangladeshi sports. Women's cricket team allrounder Rumana Ahmed and shooter Kamrun Nahar Koly share how trolling, blackmail, body shaming and targeted harassment affect their confidence, careers and personal safety -- exposing persistent gaps in protection and reporting mechanisms.

SAMSUL AREFIN KHAN and ANISUR RAHMAN

When athletes must worry more about online attacks than their on-field performance -- largely due to systemic failures -- it signals a deeper issue, something that has silently been undermining women's sports in the country.

For Rumana Ahmed, online abuse is not background noise; it disrupts focus.

"When negative things appear -- things I haven't even done -- those comments impact my career and performance," she said, adding that abuse spikes whenever form dips. Strangers fabricate reasons behind her form, letting the negativity "take a larger shape" over time.

While she has not seen teammates quit because of abuse, the rising visibility of women's cricket has intensified scrutiny. "Before, girls didn't get much focus. Now that the spotlight is here, bad comments are also increasing," she said.

Most abusers remain anonymous, as Rumana revealed that "many negative comments come from people I don't know."

Despite the emotional toll, reporting

rarely leads to action. Rumana said coaches or officials usually advise players to "avoid it" because they cannot control social media. Reporting tools on Facebook or Instagram are seldom used, partly because incidents have not escalated further, but also because athletes doubt whether complaints would help.

Rumana believes stronger legal enforcement and more support from the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) are essential. "They are doing it more because nothing happens to them. BCB should take stricter steps; it affects our performance."

Shooter Kamrun Nahar Koly faces a different layer of harassment -- deliberate attempts to unsettle athletes before competitions. "Sometimes it's fake IDs, sometimes people around us. Even colleagues driven by professional jealousy use fake accounts," she said.

She added that harassment often spills beyond social media. "Many times, direct comments in person also disturb you. Something said intentionally to hurt you." With Artificial Intelligence (AI), she feels the threat has grown. Misuse of images, doctored photos and degrading montages circulate easily, which causes major

distress and harms their performance, leading to Koly saying that female athletes "always feel unsafe."

Both athletes point to a major gap: they do not clearly know where or how to report digital abuse. Koly recalls hearing about Police Cyber Support for Women (PCSW) but says athletes lack guidance. Even when complaints are made, especially involving senior or influential individuals, she says they are often "covered up" without justice.

Her message to younger athletes reflects the overall reality. "Laws exist, but applying them is hard. So we must protect ourselves -- limit posting, reduce social media involvement, be careful."

But when athletes are told to "limit posting" or "avoid" social media, it ultimately gives perpetrators more space to operate.

The experiences of Rumana and Koly reveal a troubling pattern: female athletes navigate digital abuse largely alone, with unclear reporting pathways, limited institutional backing and perpetrators acting without consequence. As women's sports gain visibility, systems that safeguard athletes must strengthen accordingly.



Root, Starc glow under Gabba lights

Following two single-digit scores in the first Ashes Test in Perth last month, Joe Root bounced back spectacularly to put England in a strong position as they reached 325 for nine, despite Australia quick Mitchell Starc taking 6-71 on Day 1 of the pink-ball Test in Brisbane yesterday.

** With an unbeaten 135 off 202 balls, Joe Root conquered his final frontier by scoring his maiden Ashes century in Australia.

** Root became the second English batter after Maurice Leyland (126 in 1936/37) to score a century on the opening day of a Gabba Test.

** Root and Jofra Archer (32* off 26) shared an unbroken 61-run 10th-wicket stand -- the highest for the wicket in a day-night Test, surpassing the 59 by Tom Blundell and Blair Tuckner in Mount Maunganui in 2023.

** England will be encouraged by their start, as no team has ever lost a day-night Test after scoring 300+ in the first innings.

** By dismissing Harry Brook for his 415th Test wicket, Mitchell Starc became the most prolific

left-arm pacer in Test history, surpassing Wasim Akram (414 in 104 Tests). Starc reached the mark in his 102nd.

** Starc now has 86 wickets in day-night Tests -- the most by any bowler -- 43 ahead of teammate Pat Cummins, who missed this match due to injury.

** Starc took his third first-over wicket of the Ashes by removing Ben Duckett for a first-ball duck. He now has 26 first-over wickets in Tests, the most in history, with James Anderson next on 19.

** Starc, who claimed six wickets on the day, also became the first bowler to take more than 20 pink-ball Test wickets against a single team (England).



'Size doesn't matter': Amirul on Bangladesh's spirit

Bangladesh defender Amirul Islam has been one of the standout performers at the ongoing FIH Hockey Junior World Cup in India, repeatedly converting penalty corners with his drag-and-flick expertise to trouble top sides such as Australia, France and South Korea. He leads the scorers' chart with 12 goals in four matches. Amirul, who debuted for the senior team at the 2023 Hangzhou Asian Games after joining the U-21 setup in 2019, spoke to **The Daily Star's Anisur Rahman** following Bangladesh's emphatic 13-0 win over Oman yesterday. Here are the excerpts:

The Daily Star (DS): Having scored only five in last year's AHF Junior Asia Cup, how did you transform your performance?

Amirul Islam (AI): Credit goes to my teammates for providing the penalty corners. I also wanted to repay the trust coach [Stefried Aikman] placed in me. Since the Junior Asia Cup, I've worked hard with his guidance to improve my conversions, and it's paying off here.

DS: Where would you like to finish with two matches left?

AI: My focus is on the team, not individual goals. I'll give my best in the remaining matches while upholding the coach's trust.

DS: Did you expect to perform so well against top teams?

AI: Coach inspired us, saying 'size doesn't matter' and 'focus on your strengths'. We concentrated on team performance and tried to execute his instructions fully. I think we are now able to understand 90 per cent of the coach's instructions. Overall, we performed well.

DS: Bangladesh are set to finish 17th-20th. How confident are you about 17th?

AI: We're confident. The team are mentally strong, and everyone will focus on not dropping points in the next two matches.

DS: Your teammates call you 'Hamza' because of your hairstyle.

AI: I enjoy the comparison. Hamza [Chowdhury] is a top international footballer, so I take it positively.

DS: Thoughts on the irregular domestic league, last played early 2024?

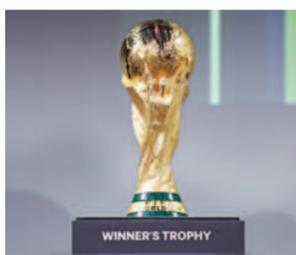
AI: We hope domestic competitions resume soon to advance hockey. The federation should also send teams abroad to improve at international level.

BIGGEST-EVER WORLD CUP DRAW takes centre stage

The draw for the first-ever 48-team FIFA World Cup will unfold at 11pm (Bangladesh Time) tonight, streamed live and free on FIFA+ and FIFA's official YouTube channel after FIFA opted against traditional television coverage. The star-studded ceremony at Washington DC's Kennedy Center will feature global sporting icons including Tom Brady, Shaquille O'Neal, Wayne Gretzky and Aaron Judge assisting Rio Ferdinand on stage as the 12 groups for next year's finals across the United States, Mexico and Canada (June 11-July 19) are revealed. With new rules keeping the top four seeds apart and an expanded format introducing an extra Round of 32, the draw marks the moment when the biggest World Cup truly begins to take shape.

THE DRAW MECHANICS

- 48 teams split into four pots of 12 based on FIFA rankings
- One team from each pot drawn into each of the 12 groups (A to L)
- Hosts already placed: Mexico in Group A; Canada in Group B; USA in Group D
- Top four seeds -- Spain, Argentina, France, England -- kept apart until the semi-finals if they all win their groups
- Confederation limits: maximum one team per group, except UEFA (up



to two)

WHO ARE IN THE POTS?

Pot 1: USA, Mexico, Canada, Spain,

Argentina, France, England, Brazil, Portugal, Netherlands, Belgium, Germany

Pot 2: Croatia, Morocco, Colombia, Uruguay, Switzerland, Japan, Senegal, Iran, South Korea, Ecuador, Austria, Australia

Pot 3: Norway, Panama, Egypt, Algeria, Scotland, Paraguay, Tunisia, Ivory Coast, Uzbekistan, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, South Africa

Pot 4: Jordan, Cape Verde, Ghana, Curaçao, Haiti, New Zealand, four UEFA play-off winners, two intercontinental play-off winners

BCB prioritises stable coaching setup before T20 WC

SPORTS REPORTER

The Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) is focusing on ensuring stability in the national team's coaching panel ahead of the upcoming ICC T20 World Cup, having resolved its issues with senior assistant coach Mohammad Salahuddin, and planning to continue with Mohammad Ashraf as the batting coach.

Last month, Salahuddin submitted his resignation citing personal reasons and expressed desire to step down following the Ireland series. However, after positive discussions with BCB high-ups, he has withdrawn his resignation, confirmed BCB cricket operations chairman Nazmul Abedeen Fahim. "He [Salahuddin] will continue his contract until it expires after the 2027 ICC World Cup," Fahim told The Daily Star on Thursday. Fahim added that the board is satisfied with the current coaching set-up, including Ashraf, who worked as a specialised batting coach



during the recent Ireland series.

"We are happy with the way it's going now. He [Ashraf] will also carry on,"

Fahim said.

It is understood that the BCB is considering offering Ashraf a long-term contract. Trainer Itikhairul Islam, who stepped in after strength and conditioning coach Nathan Kiely's departure during the Asia Cup T20, is also expected to receive an extension.

Ashraf has reportedly been assigned to oversee a week-long batting camp for selected national team batters starting December 6 in Mirpur. He will work alongside head coach Phil Simmons and Salahuddin, which means he will miss his coaching duties with Barishal Division in the ongoing National Cricket League.

Ashraf, who last played for the Tigers in 2013, said he was enjoying his return to the setup in a new role.

"Alhamdulillah, we had a very good series. The team played well, and I also enjoyed doing my job very much," Ashraf told The Daily Star.

He noted that the team's culture

remains intact, including the traditional winning song "Amra Korbo Joy" -- a practice revived during his captaincy.

"The culture is the same, Mashallah. The boys are also very conscious now. It existed in our time, but now they are even more aware of the need to work on fitness and skills."

Looking ahead, Ashraf believes the upcoming Bangladesh Premier League (BPL), starting on December 26, will play a crucial role in preparing the players for the T20 World Cup, where Bangladesh are placed in Group C alongside West Indies, England, Nepal, and Italy.

The global event will begin on February 7, just two weeks after the BPL's conclusion. "The BPL is a huge platform. If we can ensure good wickets -- where teams score 180 to 220 regularly -- that will be excellent preparation," he said.

"If our batsmen and bowlers maintain their form, I certainly see us playing in the second round," he added.

SHORT CORNER

Sanjida's Nasrin face Nepal's APF Club today in SAFF Club C'ship

The inaugural SAFF Club Women's Championship kicks off on Friday at Dasharath Rangasala Stadium in Kathmandu, featuring five league champions from Nepal, India, Bangladesh, Pakistan and Bhutan. Bangladesh Women's League winners Nasrin Sports Academy will face Nepal's APF Club in the second match, following the opening clash between Pakistan's Karachi FC and Bhutan's Transport United Ladies Club at the same venue.

Tigresses tune up for WBCL ahead of WC qualifiers

Bangladesh women's team players began a week-long fitness camp on Thursday, eyeing the upcoming Women's Bangladesh Cricket League (WBCL), which starts on December 15 in Rajshahi. All-rounder Shorna Akter turned heads on the first day, emerging as the fastest runner, while her energy during plyometric drills also drew attention.

Bangladesh U-17s tie series after nine-wicket loss

Sri Lanka U-17s thrashed Bangladesh U-17s by nine wickets in the second three-day match at Bashundhara Sports Complex on Thursday to tie the two-match series 1-1. Bangladesh U-17s won the earlier game by 27 runs in a tight contest at Mirpur's Sher-e-Bangla National Cricket Stadium.

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Pry teachers suspend strike

Say move made considering students' welfare

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Assistant government primary schoolteachers suspended their "complete shutdown" last night.

In a press release, Prathomik Shikkhok Dabi Bastobayon and Songothon Oikya parishads, which jointly held the programme across the country, said the decision was made considering the welfare of students.

It added that the suspension would come into effect from Sunday and continue until year-end exams are over.

Future programmes will be announced following discussions between the two platforms, the release said.

In another development, Mohammad Shamsuddin, a convener of the Prathomik Shikkhok Dabi Bastobayon Parishad, has been transferred to Dakshin Char Lakshmi Government Primary School in Lakhimpur's Raipur from Kripalpur Government Primary School in Noakhali.

SEE PAGE 8 COL 4



An activist of Bangladesh Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal loses balance during a scuffle with police at the Kakrail intersection yesterday. The law enforcers charged batons to disperse JASAD activists who were attempting to march towards the Chief Adviser's Office to protest the leasing out of the Chattogram port and terminals to foreign entities.

PHOTO: AMRAN HOSSAIN

NEW MOORING TERMINAL HC delivers split verdict on DP world deal

One judge says agreement illegal, the other says writ invalid

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A High Court bench yesterday delivered a dissenting verdict on a writ petition challenging the legality of the government's move to start the process of awarding a contract to UAE-based DP World for container handling at the New Mooring Container Terminal (NCT) in Chattogram.

Justice Fatema Najib, senior judge of the two-judge bench, declared the government decision illegal, saying it was taken "in violation of the relevant law and policy".

On the other hand, junior judge Justice Fatema Anwar rejected the writ, saying the petitioners had no jurisdiction to file it as they are not personally aggrieved by the decision and could not show any proof of a security threat linked to it.

The HC bench will now send the petition along with the dissenting verdict to the chief justice for a decision.

After receiving the documents, Chief Justice Syed Refaat Ahmed will assign another HC bench to hear and settle the petition, Additional Attorney General Aneek R Haque and Barrister Kayser Kamal, one of the lawyers for the writ petitioners, told The Daily Star.

SEE PAGE 8 COL 1

3-year-old boy earns official chess rating



AFP, New Delhi

India's Sarwagya Singh Kushwaha has become the youngest player in chess history to earn an official FIDE rating at the age of three years, seven months and 20 days.

The chess prodigy edged out the previous record of compatriot Anish Sarkar, who was three years, eight months and 19 days when he reached the milestone in November last year.

Kushwaha, who is enrolled in nursery school in the Indian state of Madhya Pradesh, holds a rapid rating of 1,572. To achieve a rating from FIDE, the International Chess Federation, a player needs to beat at least one FIDE-rated player.

A rating is a score that measures a chess player's strengths based on their performances and is not the same as a ranking. World number one Magnus Carlsen is the top in rapid chess with a rating of 2,824.

SEE PAGE 8 COL 3

Digital Bangladesh vision was just a political slogan

Says government-commissioned white paper on ICT

MAHMUDUL HASAN

The Awami League's flagship Digital Bangladesh vision functioned largely as "an architecture of political slogan" rather than a coherent national digital strategy, according to a government-commissioned white paper.

The much publicised promise of technological modernisation, efficiency and a digitally empowered citizenry ultimately operated as a fragile digital façade, weakened by systemic governance failures, corruption, irregularities and political capture, it said.

The White Paper, headed by M Niaz Asadullah, was recently submitted to Chief Adviser Muhammad Yunus but has not yet been released publicly. The Daily Star has reviewed a copy of the document.

The task force reviewed 52 ICT Division (ICTD) projects and examined extensive datasets, including more than 6 lakh e-GP tenders and over 30,000 software-system log records.

Its central assessment is that political influence and governance failures consistently undermined the country's digital push.

"Over time, that promise became overshadowed by mounting public concern over corruption, irregularities and systemic governance failures," the report said.

Despite the rapid expansion of connectivity, training centres and

infrastructure after 2009, the growth exposed a persistent mismatch between political ambition and institutional capacity.

As a result, strategic decisions were often aligned with partisan considerations rather than development priorities.

Flagship connectivity projects such as Info-Sarker II and III became a "textbook case of triple rent seeking", where public investment generated long-term rent streams for an existing private duopoly.

For example, of the 52 ICTD projects, at least 12 major projects and 65 components were named after political personalities or used directly for political branding, said the white paper.

It said site selections were frequently influenced by partisan interests and the ICT Masterplan 2019 formally adopted the ruling party's election manifesto as a policy reference.

Narratives of progress were also found to rely on unverified or manufactured statistics on exports, employment and

claims of large financial savings in digital public services, many endorsed by donor-funded entities.

Flagship connectivity projects such as Info-Sarker II and III became a "textbook case of triple rent seeking", where public investment generated long-term rent streams for an existing private duopoly.

The initiatives were often facilitated through National Priority Project status, which enabled the bypassing of legal procedures and the granting of lopsided revenue arrangements.

A major institutional failure was identified in the Bangladesh Hi-Tech Park Authority, whose mandate for innovation and industrial diversification was gradually redirected towards political spectacle and patronage.

The agency's activities increasingly followed a "logic of partisan visibility and patronage distribution", with parks and training centres launched without credible assessments of market demand, utility readiness or tenant capacity.

The task force highlights structural vulnerabilities in procurement and financial management across the ICT sector.

It points to syndicates of vendors, consultants and public officials that manipulated tenders, inflated costs, duplicated services and misappropriated funds.

Analysis of hardware components

SEE PAGE 8 COL 1

ICT issues arrest warrant against Joy

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The International Crimes Tribunal-1 yesterday took cognisance of formal charges in two cases against Sajeeb Wazed Joy, former ICT adviser to deposed prime minister Sheikh Hasina, and three others.

The three accused are former state minister for ICT Zunaid Ahmed Palak, ex-law minister Anisul Huq, and then premier's private industry and investment affairs adviser Salman F Rahman.

Joy and Palak have been named in a case filed over alleged crimes against humanity committed during the July-August uprising.

Anisul and Salman are accused in the other case on charges of similar offences.

The three-member tribunal led by Justice Md Golam Mortuza Mozumder issued an arrest warrant for Joy, the son of Hasina, and ordered a report on its execution by December 10.

It also issued production warrants for Anisul, Salman, and Palak, all currently in custody.

The four are among 46 individuals who were initially accused in a case. Of them, at least 19 are high-profile

SEE PAGE 8 COL 4



Putin in India for defence, trade talks



AFP, New Delhi

Russian President Vladimir Putin landed in India yesterday for a two-day visit aimed at deepening defence ties, as New Delhi faces heavy US pressure to stop buying oil from Moscow.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi was at the airport to welcome the Russian leader in person, greeting him on the red carpet with a hug, before riding together in the same car.

Putin, on his first visit to India since the Ukraine war, is accompanied by his Defence Minister Andrei Belousov, with possible deals on fighter jets and air defence systems expected to be discussed.

In an interview with India Today, Putin said he was

SEE PAGE 8 COL 3



OUR REEF AT RISK

A discarded fishing net clings to a coral in the Bay of Bengal off Saint Martin's Island, posing a grave threat to its survival. Beneath these waters, abandoned nets have become deadly traps, entangling coral colonies across the seabed. Corals, crucial to the marine ecosystem and home to countless species, are being starved of sunlight and oxygen as these nets block their growth -- slowly suffocating an oceanic world that depends on them.

PHOTO: SHARIF SARWAR

BRIBERY CASE Trump pardons Democratic congressman

AFP, Washington

US President Donald Trump has pardoned a Democratic member of Congress in a bribery case, saying the justice system had been "weaponized" by his predecessor Joe Biden.

"I am hereby announcing my full and unconditional PARDON of beloved Texas Congressman Henry Cuellar ... I don't know you, but you can sleep well tonight -- Your nightmare is finally over!" Trump said on his Truth Social platform on Wednesday.

Cuellar and his wife had been facing several charges of conspiracy and bribery based on accusations from prosecutors that they had accepted hundreds of thousands of dollars' worth of bribes from an oil and gas company partly owned by the government of Azerbaijan.

The couple have denied the charges for which they were facing trial in April.

"I want to thank President Trump for his tremendous leadership and for taking the time to look at the facts," Cuellar said in response to the pardon in a post on X on Wednesday.