



Schedule for twin votes this evening

MOHIUDDIN ALAMGIR and AHMED DEEPTO

The Election Commission will unveil the schedule this evening for the country's first-ever twin polls -- the national election and the July charter referendum -- to be held on the same day in mid-February.

Chief Election Commissioner AMM Nasir Uddin will announce the timetable in a televised address at 6:00pm today, recorded yesterday afternoon, EC Secretary Akhtar Ahmed told reporters.

Following tradition, the commission met President Mohammed Shahabuddin at Bangabhaban in the afternoon yesterday. Earlier, it met Chief Justice Syed Refaat Ahmed on Tuesday and held talks with Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus on Sunday.

The CEC and four commissioners briefed the president on preparations for the 13th national parliamentary

With the schedule, the electoral code of conduct will come into force. Advisers and senior officials will be barred from using government facilities for campaigns. The government will also be not allowed to approve or inaugurate development projects that may influence voters.

election and the referendum. The president sought detailed explanations on arrangements for holding two votes on the same day, including ballot designs, mock voting experience, and counting procedures.

"After being briefed, the president expressed satisfaction," Akhtar said.

Asked whether the schedule could face legal hurdles following the Supreme Court's directive on boundaries of constituencies of Bagerhat, the EC secretary said no court order had yet reached the commission.

"The schedule will be announced for 300 constituencies. If any correction is required later, that can be done accordingly," he said.

The Supreme Court yesterday upheld a High Court

SEE PAGE 2 COL 4



A blockade by mobile phone traders and their employees at Sonargaon hotel intersection created severe gridlocks that spread across the city yesterday evening, causing immense suffering to commuters after office hours. The demonstrators protested against the government decision to deactivate unauthorised handsets.

Related story on B1

PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

Khaleda is 'responding to treatment' Says her doctor

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia is receiving treatment in the intensive care unit of Evercare Hospital, and she is getting the care her condition requires, said her personal physician Dr Zahid Hossain last night.

The former prime minister is under the highest level of medical supervision, and she is

SEE PAGE 2 COL 4

NCP unveils 125 candidates 14 women among them

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

National Citizen Party yesterday announced nominees in 125 constituencies, pitting its top leaders against rivals from BNP and Jamaat-e-Islami in key Dhaka seats in the upcoming national election.

According to the preliminary list of candidates, NCP Convener Nahid Islam will contest Dhaka-11, where BNP has fielded MA Qaiyum, microcredit affairs secretary to the party's National Executive Committee. Jamaat has primarily nominated Atikur Rahman for the seat.

Similarly, NCP Chief Coordinator Nasiruddin Patwary will run in Dhaka-18, facing BNP nominee SM Jahangir Hossain, joint convener of Dhaka North BNP and a

SEE PAGE 5 COL 1

Asif, Mahfuj quit advisory council 'Resignations to take effect once polls schedule is announced'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

LGRD Adviser Asif Mahmud Shojib Bhuyain and Information Adviser Mahfuj Alam submitted their resignations from the advisory council yesterday.

The Chief Adviser's Press Secretary Shafiqul Alam at a press conference outside State Guest House Jamuna said the two advisers went to Jamuna and submitted their resignation letters to Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus, which he accepted.

The resignations will take effect with the announcement of the election schedule of the 13th parliamentary polls by the Election Commission, he added.

Chief Election Commissioner AMM Nasir Uddin is scheduled to announce the schedule at 6:00pm today, EC Senior Secretary Akhtar Ahmed told reporters at the Nirbachon Bhaban yesterday.

At the briefing, Shafiqul quoted the chief adviser as saying, "The way you [the two advisers] led the uprising and contributed to freeing the nation from fascist rule will be remembered by the nation. I believe you will

SEE PAGE 2 COL 4

Fifty-three years after independence, countless stories of the Liberation War still lie hidden in the folds of memory. Part 6 of this series turns to Chattogram, a city where guerrilla fighters stitched fear into the occupiers' ranks through swift, coordinated blows.

Guerrillas blow up 85 targets in Chattogram



TALES OF FREEDOM

AHMAD ISTIAK

Chattogram woke before dawn to the roar of fire and shuddering steel -- an electric transformer here, a petrol pump there -- until, within an hour, it became a city of explosions.

It was December 6, 1971. Between 3:00am and 4:00am, guerrilla fighters struck 85

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

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LGRD Adviser Asif Mahmud Shojib Bhuyain and Information Adviser Mahfuj Alam handed over their resignation letters to Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus at Jamuna yesterday afternoon. Their resignation will be effective immediately after the announcement of the election schedule, CA's Press Secretary Shafiquel Alam said.

PHOTO: CA'S PRESS WING

Finance adviser confined at Secretariat for over 5 hours

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Employees of various ministries and departments staged a protest at the Bangladesh Secretariat yesterday, demanding a 20 percent allowance for Secretariat staff, during which they confined Finance Adviser Salehuddin Ahmed.

According to witnesses, around 2:30pm, 150-200 non-cadre staff gathered in front of the office of Salehuddin. He was confined for about five and a half hours.

As the employees did not move even after being repeatedly told to do so, around 7:30pm, police personnel stationed at the Secretariat were called in. The police dispersed the protesters. Salehuddin left around 8:30pm.

Earlier, during the protest, some employees urged the government to issue a gazette by meeting their demand yesterday.

They noted that the schedule for the national election will be announced today and expressed concern that their demand might not be met afterwards.



Guerrillas blow up 85 targets in Chattogram

FROM PAGE 1
points across the city in a single, coordinated wave. They had planned for a hundred. But, as Dr Mahfuzur Rahman, explosives chief and group commander, now 83, recalled, "Since freedom fighter Syed Emran was caught at the last minute, the 15 operations of his unit were unsuccessful."

The blasts plunged the Pakistani army into chaos. Freedom fighter Abul Kashem of Pahartali, now 80, said, "Only the group commanders knew about the coordinated operation for the sake of security. It took at least a week for the Pakistanis to move normally after the strikes."

During the war, at least 500 guerrillas carried out more than 400 operations here, the highest recorded in any single city.

recruits in their neighbourhoods.

By August, more than a hundred fighters from three Bangladesh Liberation Force groups entered the city. In September, four more BLF groups and at least 40 FF groups arrived, spreading the war across Chattogram.

Operations struck the Ice Factory, Kaibalyadham Petrol Train, Hotel Agrabad, American Express Bank, Lajaf Petrol Pump, and the Maykong Chinese Restaurant.

In October, the Pakistani regime declared East Pakistan "normal", prompting a UN observer team to visit and stay at Hotel Agrabad under tight guard. The fighters vowed to expose the lie.

After three days of reconnaissance, they chose the hotel transformer as their mark. On October 23, seven to

By September, funds ran low. Guerrillas decided to rob the American Express Bank in Agrabad. Under Engineer Harun's leadership, they hijacked a car; Harun waited outside while others stormed the bank at gunpoint.

They escaped with Tk 40,000, including Tk 19,000 in cash and the rest in foreign currency, which was handed to Moulvi Syed, said Fazul.

On November 1, they ambushed a central bank vehicle expected to carry Tk 2 lakh to the tax office. But a Pakistani soldier near New Market spotted them, triggering a gunfight.

Freedom fighter Rafiq Ahmad was martyred. Three fighters, including Fazul and Shafiqul Bashar, were shot. "The Pakistanis captured Bashar. We rescued him alive on December 16," said Fazul.

At least 20 guerrillas were captured

Schedule for twin votes this evening

FROM PAGE 1
verdict that struck down the EC gazette reducing Bagerhat's seats from four to three and increasing Gazipur's from five to six. A bench headed by Chief Justice Rezaat Ahmed dismissed a leave-to-appeal petition challenging the ruling.

On November 10, the High Court had declared the delimitation of Bagerhat-1, Bagerhat-2, Bagerhat-3 and Gazipur-6 illegal and ordered restoration of the previous boundaries.

Earlier, Election Commissioner Anwarul Islam Sarkar told this newspaper the polls and referendum were expected between February 8 and 14.

Officials noted that elections are usually held the day before or after weekends. February 13 and 14 are weekends, and Ramadan is expected to begin on February 17 or 18, subject to the sighting of the moon.

The announcement of the schedule marks the formal start of the electoral process. Under the Representation of the People Order, 1972, the EC will issue the timetable through a gazette.

As per the code of conduct, campaigns may begin only three weeks (21 days) before polling. The preceding days will be used for finalising candidacies, nomination form submission, scrutiny, withdrawals, appeals, and allocation of symbols.

Once the schedule is announced, a public notification will follow, along with the appointment of returning officers (ROs) and assistant returning officers (AROs). They will handle all administrative tasks to ensure a fair vote.

Candidates have been instructed to remove posters, placards, banners, and billboards from public spaces within 48 hours of the announcement

of the schedule. The EC will also send a demi-official letter to the Cabinet Division, seeking assistance and requesting that field-level officers not be transferred until results are published.

With the schedule, the electoral code of conduct will come into force. Advisers and senior officials will be barred from using government facilities for campaigns. The government will also be not allowed to approve or inaugurate development projects that may influence voters.

WHAT'S NEW

Polling will continue from 7:30am to 4:30pm, an hour longer, as voters will cast both their votes and referendum ballots.

The referendum ballot will be dropped into a pink box, and the national polls ballot into a black and white one.

More secret booths will be set up. Constituencies with only one candidate running will feature a "no vote" option.

For the first time, campaign posters are banned to protect the environment.

Expatriates have an online registration system for postal ballots, and by yesterday evening about 2,97,000 had registered. Their ballots will carry only party and independent symbols, not candidate names, and must reach returning officers before the close of voting.

PREPARATIONS

The EC has finalised plans for 42,761 polling centres and 2,44,739 booths for around 12.76 crore voters. All materials, including ballots, will reach centres the day before voting.

The EC has published the final voter list, completed delimitation of 300 constituencies, approved registration

of two new political parties with two more pending, and updated the electoral code.

Several lakh officials, including presiding officers, assistant presiding officers and polling officers, are being appointed, and their training is underway.

Meanwhile, the government has amended the Representation of the People Order and nearly completed major reshuffles in field administration and police. It has changed 50 deputy commissioners and police superintendents across 64 districts and officers in-charge in 577 of 639 police stations.

In national elections, deputy commissioners and the divisional commissioners of Dhaka and Chattogram usually serve as returning officers, while police maintain law and order.

In mid-October, 25 parties signed the July National Charter after three rounds of negotiations among 30 parties and the National Consensus Commission on constitutional reforms. The National Citizen Party and four others refrained from signing the charter.

On October 28, the commission submitted recommendations on the July charter implementation. But political divisions deepened, especially over the referendum.

On November 3, the government gave parties a week to reach consensus or else it would "act as necessary". When the deadline passed, on November 13, it announced that the national election and referendum would be held on the same day, and an upper house would be introduced through the proportional representation system.

Asif, Mahfuj quit advisory council

FROM PAGE 1
continue to play an active role in democratic transition and development in the future as well.

"The interim government will always remember your contribution. I wish you a bright and prosperous future. The nation will never forget what you have given in such a short time."

Urging them to remain engaged in the welfare of the country through their work, Yunus further said, "The experience you have gained while serving in the government must certainly be put to use in your future lives."

Their resignations now leave the advisory council with no student leaders. Earlier, National Citizen Party Convener Nahid Islam resigned from the position of information adviser in the interim government.

Government sources said Asif and Mahfuj were told to resign from the interim government in September, which they refused.

Without mentioning names, BNP has been demanding the resignation of student advisers, saying their presence in the interim administration will create a conflict of interest as the

student-led NCP is also participating in the polls.

At a press briefing in the conference room of the Local Government Division earlier in the day, Asif reiterated that he will participate in the upcoming national election but did not clarify when he will resign from the council of advisers. He was one of the frontline coordinators of the Anti-Discrimination Student Movement, the platform that led the July uprising.

After the fall of the Sheikh Hasina-led government, he was appointed as a student representative in the advisory council of the interim government, formed on August 8 last year. Alongside his responsibilities as adviser to the local government ministry, he also served as youth and sports adviser.

Although hailing from Cumilla, Asif is likely to contest the election from Dhaka-10, where BNP and Jamaat have already nominated their candidates.

Meanwhile, NCP in its first-phase list of candidates for 125 constituencies announced yesterday did not nominate anyone for Dhaka 10.

In November, Asif became a voter

of Dhanmondi zone under Dhaka-10 constituency, which comprises Dhanmondi, New Market, Kalabagan and Hazaribagh areas, indicating that he is likely to contest from this seat.

He told reporters yesterday that he will inform the media later from which party he will contest the polls.

Adviser Mahfuj Alam was given the portfolio of the information ministry on February 26 to fill the vacancy left by the resignation of Nahid, who stepped down to lead NCP.

A graduated from Dhaka University's law department, he was the coordinator of the liaison committee of the Anti-Discrimination Student Movement, and was appointed as a special assistant to the chief adviser with the status of secretary on August 28 last year. He was later made an adviser without portfolio on November 10.

Mahfuj, however, has yet to give any formal announcement on whether he will participate in the upcoming election.

BNP and Jamaat have nominated their candidates for Laxmipur-1, which is the constituency Mahfuj hails from. NCP did not field a candidate there yet.

Khaleda is 'responding to treatment'

FROM PAGE 1
responding to treatment, he added.

Considering Khaleda's current health condition, it is not yet time to take her abroad for advanced treatment, he said.

"I urge everyone not to pay heed to any rumours regarding her condition," Dr Zahid said to reporters outside the hospital in Dhaka.

Khaleda, 80, was admitted to the hospital on November 23 on the advice of her medical board after being diagnosed with infections in her heart and lungs.

She is also suffering from pneumonia and has long been battling multiple complications, including liver cirrhosis, arthritis, diabetes, and chronic issues affecting her kidneys, lungs, heart, and eyes. She has a permanent pacemaker and previously underwent stent placement.

Asked about her present condition, Dr Zahid said she was receiving the same treatment as before. "In medical terms, she can continue maintaining her treatment. The doctors are providing care, which she is receiving,

and she is responding to it."

A medical board led by cardiologist Prof Shahabuddin Talukder, with specialists from Bangladesh, the UK, the US, China, and Australia, continues to oversee her treatment.

Dr Zubaida Rahman, wife of Khaleda's son and acting BNP chairman Tarique Rahman, arrived in Dhaka on December 5. BNP leaders said Zubaida has been spending most of the day by Khaleda's side, coordinating her care.

'TIME HASN'T COME

YET FOR ABROAD'

Dr Zahid said Khaleda's treatment was being conducted in consultation with doctors at home and abroad, and they remained hopeful that her care would be ensured properly.

"Later, if necessary, she may be taken abroad at any time. But at this stage, this is where things stand," he said. "We had discussed it earlier, but what Allah has planned for her is beyond anyone's control."

Although the party earlier announced twice that she would be taken abroad, both attempts fell through.

The medical board decided last

Friday that she could be moved overseas, but technical issues with the air ambulance and her health condition prevented the transfer, Dr Zahid said.

He stressed that the board was consistently working to ensure the best possible care. Efforts were also underway, both locally and abroad, to secure any additional treatment she might require, based on medical recommendations.

Acknowledging the anxiety among Khaleda's supporters, he said doctors must respect the patient's rights and privacy. "We must remember that she is a patient and has her own ethical rights and privileges. As a doctor, I cannot disclose everything openly; medical science does not permit it."

"Under no circumstances, we allow emotions or feelings to lead to excessive sharing or confusion among the people," he said, urging the public not to fall for misinformation or rumours regarding her condition.

He also urged the people to pray for her recovery. Special prayers were offered across the country for the former prime minister's swift healing.



PHOTO: AHMAD ISTIAK

Site of Operation Ice Factory

In April, this correspondent spoke with at least 20 freedom fighters in Chattogram. Their memories echo the written record – Jamal Uddin's "Muktijuddhe Chattogram Shahor", Mahfuzur Rahman's "Banglaer Jatiyatabadi Sangram Muktijuddhe Chattogram", and the sector-wise chronicles.

Together, they sketch a city quietly preparing for war after Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman's March 7 speech. Secret training under Awami League leader Moulvi Syed Ahmed began almost immediately. After March 25, Bangalee soldiers of the Bengal Regiment and EPR resisted but had to withdraw. As Pakistani and Bihari forces seized control and carried out massacres, the city emptied.

In early April, students and youths slipped into India for training. Many hesitated, until Moulvi Syed printed a leaflet calling them to arms. The response swept across neighbourhoods, and training began beside Noor Mohammad's house in Chhotopool, Agrabad.

Meanwhile, lightly trained Ansar men and guerrillas launched small strikes. After taking oath on May 7, fighters established their main base at Sabujbagh in Panwalapara.

Among the earliest major missions was Operation Chawkbazar. On May 18, Jahangir Group fighters spotted four Pakistani soldiers in a jeep and hurled a grenade in Kapasgola, destroying the vehicle and killing the soldiers.

Through May and June, their task was to spread dread. Dost Mohammad, now 72, said, "We arranged shelters for the trained guerrillas who came from India in various houses in the city." By June, fighters were slipping back inside Chattogram.

Freedom fighter Fazul Haque Bhuiyan, now 75, said his group returned on June 16 after training in India.

"We had instructions that no Dalal or Razakar would be allowed in the city so that the remaining guerrillas could also enter the city," said Nuruddin Chowdhury, now 70. Those fighters trained new

eight fighters led by Mahfuzur Rahman stormed the site. Shafiq Munshi, now 70, recalled, "We kept two freedom fighters on guard outside and first held the security guards and the Razakars hostage by pointing revolvers at their chests."

"Freedom fighters Faiz and Garibullah burned their hands while trying to install high-explosives in the transformer... Within a short time, the transformer exploded, causing power outages and panic in the area." The blast carried the truth to the observers.

A week later came Kaibalyadham, the city's most devastating ambush, killing 20 Pakistani soldiers. For three days, fighters tracked an army train moving between Battali Kattali and Mirsarai. On a bustling market day at Colonel Hat, the city emptied.



Raisul Haque Bahar's group slipped into the crowd disguised as foot pilgrims, explosives hidden in their bags.

Imtiyar Uddin Pasha, now 73, said, "As planned, we planted explosives in the evening and hid. When the first two coaches crossed, Bahar Bhai pulled the wire with the T&T cord. A terrible explosion occurred immediately. All the Pakistani soldiers on the train were killed."

WEAPONS, FUNDS, TORTURE

Arms flowed from India along many routes, including Banshbaria via Mirsarai, then travelled by sea through Katuli, said freedom fighter Shafiqul Alam, now 73.

Sometimes, the delivery required disguise. Mohammad Hossain, now 84, remembered one fighter who posed as a corpse in an ambulance to smuggle weapons.

and tortured in Dalim Hotel, Dewan Hotel, Goods Hill, Circuit House, the Stadium, and other centres.

On November 22, Jahangir Chowdhury of the 96-FF Group was captured in Madarbari.

"On the orders of Mir Quasem Ali, I was taken to Dalim Hotel, beaten with iron rods and wires every morning and afternoon. They tortured me inhumanely for 23 days until the morning of December 16," said Jahangir, now 78.

On December 1, KC-7 fighter Syed Mohammad Emran was seized from Chandaon. He and his six brothers were blindfolded and dragged to Dalim Hotel. "They hung me upside down from the ceiling and started to beat me. I felt like I spent every day in a city of death until December 16," said Emran, now 77.

On November 23, Al-Badr militias kidnapped Abul Mansur, a key organiser and postgraduate student of Chittagong University. He was never found, said freedom fighter Touhidul Karim, now 73.

SHELTERS, NEWSPAPER

City residents risked everything to hide fighters. Safe houses included the homes of Abu Sayeed Sardar in Panwalapara Sabujbagh; Monaf Sawdagar in Hajipara; Noor Mohammad in Chhotapuli; Enayet Mawla's 'Kakoli' on OR Nizam Road; and even the shrine of Amanat Shah.

Medical shelters rose as well. Kunda Prabha Sen opened a temporary centre in Patharghata; Dr Nurul Alam ran a mobile hospital at Begumina School; and Dr Mohammad Shahidullah, Dr Anwar Ali, and Manjula Anwar treated the wounded in Agrabad.

Dr Mahfuzur said, "Chattogram city was then a non-Bangalee and Bihari-dominated area. Even so, the people of the city gave us shelter and food at the risk of their lives. I think it was the people who fought, and we cooperated with them."

The fighters also printed newspapers and leaflets to shape opinion and record their missions. Paramount Press in Madarbari printed the paper, while Sulekha Printing House produced leaflets.

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Issue notice for Joy to appear by Dec 17

Orders ICT-1

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The International Crimes Tribunal-1 yesterday ordered notices to be published in two national dailies, asking absconding accused Sajeed Wazed Joy to appear before it by December 17 in a case over alleged crimes against humanity committed during the July uprising.

The three-member tribunal, led by Justice Md Golam Mortuza Mozumder, issued the order after prosecutors reported that the arrest warrant for Joy could not be executed. His co-accused, former state minister for ICT Zunaid Ahmed Palak, who is now in custody, was produced before the court.

The tribunal set December 17 for hearings on charge framing in the case.

The same date was

SEE PAGE 9 COL 6



Speakers at a roundtable titled 'Building Competent Learners in Bangladesh: Evidence on Foundational Skills of Children' at The Daily Star Centre yesterday. The Daily Star and the Institute of Informatics and Development organised the event.

High enrolment, low learning gains

Speakers tell Star-IID discussion

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a roundtable yesterday expressed deep concern over Bangladesh's foundational learning crisis, warning that high enrolment and increasing private spending on education are not leading to real learning gains.

They noted that although Bangladesh has achieved near-universal school enrolment, ensured free textbook distribution, and introduced mother-tongue-based instructions, serious questions remain about what children are actually learning.

They highlighted findings from a recent ICAN-ICAR study showing that 58 percent of Bangladeshi children depend on private tutoring, one of the highest rates globally, and that despite significant household spending, neither formal schooling nor private tutoring is delivering strong foundational learning outcomes.

The findings were discussed

at a roundtable, titled "Building Competent Learners in Bangladesh: Evidence on Foundational Skills of Children," jointly organised by The Daily Star and the Institute of Informatics and Development (IID) at The Daily Star Centre yesterday.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Prioritise teacher training

Increase access to education resources

Focus on improving classroom quality

Implement comprehensive reforms

The ICAN-ICAR study is a citizen-led, household-based assessment coordinated by the People's Action for Learning (PAL) Network and implemented in Bangladesh by IID. It covered all 64 districts and 275 villages, and assessed 6,479 children aged 5 to 16.

Presenting the keynote, IID

SEE PAGE 9 COL 2

UN proposals saw 'mixed response'

Says Huma Khan about report on July rights violations

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Outgoing head of the UN Human Rights Office in Bangladesh, Huma Khan, expressed dissatisfaction with the government's failure to disband the Rab and implement key institutional reforms, while also acknowledging progress on several recommendations, including the swift enactment of a law on enforced disappearances.

"In terms of following up on the recommendations of the UN fact-finding report [on human rights violations and abuses during the uprising], it has been a mixed response," she said, noting that while the government "has been able to implement a number of recommendations," many others remain unimplemented.

Huma Khan made these remarks at an event where Tech Global Institute, Netra News, and the International Truth and Justice Project jointly launched the Monsoon Protest Archive -- an online repository documenting digital evidence of the July uprising in Bangladesh.

The website (<https://monsoonprotestarchive.com>) was unveiled at the Bangla Academy.

Huma Khan said OHCHR had placed "a lot of emphasis

SEE PAGE 9 COL 6

OHCHR had placed "a lot of emphasis on disbanding Rab, but that didn't happen," though there were "welcome changes in the criminal code," including the enactment of a law on enforced disappearances.

HUMA KHAN

'We still lack space for rights to flourish'

Sultana Kamal tells discussion marking Human Rights Day

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh still lacks a space where human rights can truly flourish, said rights activist Sultana Kamal yesterday. She expressed hesitation in speaking on the topic, stating that the country has lost the moral ground needed to uphold these values.

"Without building that space free from fear and oppression, talk of dignity, justice, or equality will remain hollow," Sultana Kamal said, addressing a discussion at the Liberation War Museum on International Human Rights Day.

Using a metaphor from Rabindranath Tagore, the former caretaker government adviser illustrated the crisis. "If we cannot prepare the 'lotus', where will the goddess 'Lakshmi' sit? We have failed to build that space," she said.

Sultana said rights are often viewed narrowly as protection from arrest or torture, but their true necessity lies in the daily process of "becoming human".

She emphasised that rights are not merely matters of law or courts

but a fundamental cultural issue that must be reflected in daily behaviour.

"The state does not give me my rights, nor can anyone take them away. The state can only be the protector," she said, adding that rights are innate and inalienable.



Without building that space free from fear and oppression, talk of dignity, justice, or equality will remain hollow.

SULTANA KAMAL

Expressing deep concern over the degradation of social values, she contrasted Bangladesh's situation with global standards of accountability.

"In our country, be it personal, social, or state level, there is no accountability. We have fallen into a social system where we have forgotten to show even a modicum of respect for one another."

Tracing the history of rights, Sultana reminded the audience that the demand for the "Rule of Law" dates back to the Magna Carta of 1215. "Article 39 of the Magna Carta established the freedom of speech, movement, and belief. Today, we are still voicing the same demands: no one should be arrested arbitrarily or punished without proven guilt," she said.

"Where there is no liberty, justice, and peace, there are no human rights," she said, adding that the ultimate goal is ensuring people are never forced to live in a culture of fear.

Sultana also criticised the contradictions regarding gender equality. She pointed out that while the Constitution guarantees equal rights, discrimination against women is often perpetuated using religion and culture as shields.

SEE PAGE 9 COL 5

Divisive politics hindered progress on human rights

Says Nur Khan Liton

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Opting for divisive politics, rather than choosing a path that brings everyone together, has wasted the opportunity to strengthen the human rights situation in the country in the post-uprising period, said HRSS Adviser and rights activist Nur Khan Liton yesterday.

"People are still found dead in rivers. We see custodial torture. Extrajudicial killings are increasing again. Public demands are being crushed with force," he said, urging the government to send a strong message to security forces to prevent abuses.

He made the remarks at an event marking Human Rights Day 2025, jointly organised by HRSS and the UN Human Rights Office Bangladesh at the National Museum in Shahbagh. This year's theme was "Human Rights: Our Everyday Essentials".

Liton acknowledged some improvements, such as a decline in state-backed crossfire incidents and enforced disappearances.

However, he said the true number of enforced disappearance victims is much higher than the official estimate of 250 to 400.

"When we investigate one complaint, we often find two more victims whose families never came forward," he said.

Liton said serious violations continue, and the

SEE PAGE 9 COL 4

Star journo among 10 wins NIMC-UNDP media award

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

For in-depth reporting on judicial independence, ten journalists

-- including Baharam Khan The Daily Star's Senior Reporter Baharam Khan -- have been honoured at the "Media Award on Judicial Independence 2025," organised by the National Institute of Mass Communication (NIMC) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

Certificates and prize money were handed over to the winners at an award ceremony held yesterday at the NIMC auditorium on Darussalam Road in Dhaka.

The other awardees are

SEE PAGE 9 COL 2



Apprehension over fair polls persists

Debapriya tells meeting in Ctg

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Despite a clear national consensus for the upcoming national election, the persistent public apprehension regarding the capacity to hold a credible and fair election has not been dispelled, said Dr Debapriya Bhattacharya, distinguished fellow of the Centre for Policy Dialogue, yesterday.

Speaking after a regional pre-election consultation meeting of the Citizen's Platform at a hotel in the port city, Debapriya, the platform's convener, stressed that the government and the Election Commission must work to remove this apprehension and ensure a widely acceptable election based on maximum public participation.

Participants, including citizens, teachers, researchers, lawyers, businesspeople, and political representatives from across Chattogram, demanded good governance, accountability, the rule of law, and a robust and independent judiciary.

They said despite the recent movement and calls for wide-ranging institutional reforms, there has been no significant discussion or push for internal reform within political parties ahead of the election.

Debapriya emphasised that the key to accountability lies with the citizens, who must take a bold and proactive role rather than solely relying on politicians or the government.

The economist noted a positive shift in political

SEE PAGE 9 COL 4



PHOTO: TITU DAS

Seven-year-old Mariam carries her father's lunch, wrapped in a cloth, on her head as she walks to the paddy field where he works. The photo was taken in the Bukhainagar area of Barishal Sadar upazila recently.

TK 600CR GRAFT ACC files case against Bashundhara chair, 15 others

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Anti-Corruption Commission has filed a case against Bashundhara Group Chairman Ahmed Akbar Sobhan and 15 others over allegations of embezzling Tk 600 crore from National Bank PLC.

ACC Director General (Prevention) Md Akhtar Hossain confirmed the case yesterday, stating that Sobhan's sons, Sadat Sobhan and Safiat Sobhan, along with several directors of National Bank, have been named as co-accused.

The bank directors include Monwara Shikdar, Parveen Haque Shikdar, Moazzem Hossain, Rick Haque Shikdar, Ron Haque Shikdar, Anwar Hossain, and AKM Enamul Haque Shamim.

According to the case statement, the accused

SEE PAGE 9 COL 1



PHOTO: STAR

RAILWAY WEST ZONE

58 out of 162 stations remain closed

AZIBOR RAHMAN, Jhenaidah

Fifty-eight of the 162 railway stations in the West Zone remain closed, causing immense hardship for commuters across Jashore, Jhenidah, Kushtia, Meherpur and Chuadanga.

According to the Divisional Transportation Office, only 104 stations are currently operational. The closures, attributed to severe manpower shortages, began with Yeasinpur station in Ishwardi on March 25, 1993, and the most recent shutdown was Mirpur station in Khulna on March 11, 2025.

Residents of remote areas say the suspension of train stops has cut off their only reliable mode of transport. With poor or non-existent road connectivity, trains had long served as the lifeline for both travel and transportation of agricultural produce.

Local farmers said they are now

forced to sell their crops in nearby markets at lower prices. One farmer said that if trains stopped at their local stations, they could carry produce to distant markets and earn a fair price.



Raihan Master of Sundarpur village told The Daily Star that people from Sundarpur, Chandba, Aktarpur, Khatalia and Kalukhali are incurring heavy losses.

He said the nearest bus road is 10 kilometres away from the Kaliganj upazila headquarters, making travel

costly and time-consuming.

Fazlur Rahman, headteacher of Churamonkati-Satiantala Secondary School, said reopening Meherullah Nagar station would greatly benefit university students and ease travel for locals.

Hazrat Ali, a Dhaka University student from Sundarpur, said he faces difficulties travelling home. "I have to get down at Kaliganj town and find other transport because the Sundarpur station is closed, and the journey would be much easier if it were operating," he added.

Contacted, Divisional Transportation Officer Hasina Khatun said all the closed stations suffer from acute manpower shortages.

"Operations would resume if the government provides the required staff," she said.

Railway Director General Md Shamsuzzaman could not be reached for comment despite multiple attempts.

FRANCO-GERMAN Sumaiya Islam wins human rights award

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Human rights defender and Executive Director of Bangladesh Nari Sramik Kendra (BNSK), Sumaiya Islam, has been awarded the 2025 Franco-German Award for Human Rights and the Rule of Law.



Ambassadors of France and Germany to Bangladesh, Jean-Marc Séré-Charlet and Dr Rüdiger Lotz, presented the award to Sumaiya at a special ceremony yesterday at the Franco-German Embassy in Dhaka, on the occasion of International Human Rights Day, said a statement.

Sumaiya received the award for her long-standing dedication to advancing the rights of women — particularly migrant workers, sex workers, transgender persons, and others who are socially and economically marginalized. She also served as a member of the Women's Affairs Reform Commission of the interim government.

"It is a great honour, and I am truly grateful and deeply happy to receive this Franco-German Human Rights Prize," said Sumaiya.

"This recognition will help amplify my work and that of BNSK, enabling us to leverage this honour to further strengthen our initiatives to protect and advance the rights of women migrant workers globally," she added.

PRAYER TIMING

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

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

Tejgaon College student dies four days after attack

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A Tejgaon College student died yesterday, four days after he sustained injuries in an attack at a dormitory.

Sakibul Hasan Rana, 18, a class XII student, passed away around noon in the ICU of a Moghbazar hospital in Dhaka.

Sher-e-Bangla Nagar Police Station Officer-in-Charge Monirul Islam told The Daily Star, "His family took the body to Gazipur... without informing us. We asked them to bring it back for an autopsy."

No case had been filed yet, he added. Morshed Alam Torun, convener of the college unit of Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal, said he heard a scuffle broke out when Rana and other residents protested as several outsiders were taking drugs inside the dormitory on December 6.

When Rana and other residents protested, a scuffle broke out. The outsiders then left. About half an hour later, they returned and attacked the students, including Rana, Torun said.

Rana's classmate Abu Bakar said he was attacked for protesting drug abuse. He claimed that members of both groups were associated with Chhatra Dal leaders.

147 school buildings in Jashore declared risky

MOHSIN MILON, Benapole

Following the recent earthquakes, at least 147 of the total 1,285 government primary schools in Jashore have been declared risky.

Thousands of children have to attend classes in unsafe buildings.

The Jashore District Primary Education Office prepared the list after the earthquakes and has submitted it to the Directorate of Primary Education, said District Primary Education Officer Ashrafal Alam.

Of the risky buildings, 41 are in Sharsha, 29 in Manirampur, 25 in Jhikargachha, 15 in Bagharpara, 12 in Chaugachha, 18 in Jashore Sadar, four in Keshabpur and three in Abhaynagar upazilas.

At Ghop Seba Sangha Govt Primary School in Jashore town, cracks run through the walls and plaster continues to fall.

"We have no alternative classrooms, so we are compelled to

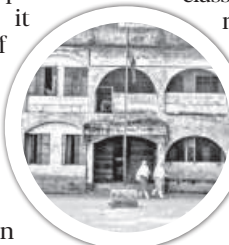
continue classes in this building," said Headteacher Saeeda Yasmin. "The upazila office has declared it risky, and we have applied for a new structure."

Conditions are even worse at Nalia Govt Primary School in Fatehpur under Sadar upazila.

Large sections of plaster have eroded, the tin roof is broken, and classrooms flood even in light rain. Bamboo poles now hold up parts of the roof.

Nearly all the school buildings marked unsafe across the district are in a similar condition, with severe cracks, leaking roofs, poor ventilation and lighting, and unhygienic sanitation.

Officials say all the schools require urgent repair or reconstruction. "We submitted Jashore's list after receiving instructions to identify structurally vulnerable buildings... We are now awaiting further directives from the Directorate of Primary Education," said Ashrafal.



Palli Karma-Sahayak Foundation (PKSF)

PKSF Bhaban-1, E-4/B, Agargaon Administrative Area, Sher-e-Bangla Nagar, Dhaka-1207
Phone: 88-02-222218331-33, 02-222218335-39; Website: <https://www.pksf.org.bd>

Memo No: 53.23.0000.043.03.017.25.6956

Date: 11 December 2025

REQUEST FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST (CONSULTING SERVICES – FIRM SELECTION)

Country: The People's Republic of Bangladesh

Name of the project: Sustainable Microenterprise and Resilient Transformation (SMART)

Credit No.: IDA-7300

Assignment Title: Selection of Firm for IOT-based Environmental Parameter Traceability

Reference No. PKSF/SMART/S-05(R)

- The Palli Karma-Sahayak Foundation (PKSF) has received financing from the World Bank toward the cost of the Sustainable Microenterprise and Resilient Transformation (SMART) and intends to apply part of the proceeds for consulting services.
- The consulting services ("the Services") include (*but not limited to*) Design, deployment and maintenance of IoT sensors in the selected clusters to monitor environmental parameters, Design and develop a centralized dashboard (web-based and mobile) for real-time visualization with interactive charts, mapping, and threshold alerts for optimized decision-making, Implement automated control systems, such as sprinklers, exhaust fans, automatic lights, fogger control, and aerator control, based on sensor data to minimize manual intervention, save resources, and enhance efficiency across various subsectors etc.

The assignment will require an *estimated of 42 professional staff-months* of the key experts as per the assignment requirement mentioned in the Terms of Reference (TOR). The assignment is expected to be continued for 30 (thirty) months. The assignment is expected to be started from May 2026.

- The detailed Terms of Reference (TOR) for the assignment can be obtained from the PKSF website (www.pksf.org.bd/tender).
- The Palli Karma-Sahayak Foundation (PKSF) now invites eligible consulting firms ("Consultants") to indicate their interest in providing the Services. Interested Consultants should provide information demonstrating that they have the required qualifications and relevant experience to perform the Services. The shortlisting criteria are: General experience (years in business), Having Ready-to-use IoT traceability platform online, Experience in relevant IOT-based assignments, Experience in implementing different digital solutions packages, and Experience in implementing IoT-based Environmental Parameters monitoring assignment.

Consultants are requested to submit the following supporting documents in support of the above-mentioned criteria:

- Up-to-date relevant registration papers of the firm(s);
- JV agreement/ letter of intent along with the proposed JV agreement (if applicable);
- Firm's brochure including staffing;
- Record of all the relevant experiences (including name of the assignment, scope, contract amount, name of the client, total input in terms of man-month, period of contract (date of contract signing to date of completion), location of the services, name of the development partner etc.)
- All the necessary documents (as required in section-9 of the TOR) to substantiate satisfaction of the shortlisting criteria listed above;*

Notably, Key personnel will not be evaluated at the shortlisting stage;

- The attention of interested Consultants is drawn to Section III, paragraphs, 3.14, 3.16, and 3.17 of the World Bank "Procurement Regulations for IPF Borrowers" September 2023 setting forth the World Bank's policy on conflict of interest.
- Consultants may associate with other firms to enhance their qualifications, but should indicate clearly whether the association is in the form of a joint-venture or a sub-consultancy. In the case of a joint venture, all the partners in the joint venture shall be jointly and severally liable for the entire contract, if selected. In case of an association, all members of such "association" must have real and well-defined inputs to the assignment and in such "association" it is preferable to limit the total number of firms including the associates to a maximum of 03 (three). Notably, the qualifications of sub-consultants will not be considered in the EOI evaluation and shortlisting process.
- A Consultant will be selected in accordance with the **Consultants Qualifications-based Selection (CQS)** method (National market approach) set out in the World Bank Procurement Regulations.
- Further information can be obtained at the address below either by e-mail or in person during office hours: 10:00 to 16:00 hours.
- Expression of Interest (EOI) must be delivered in a written form (Hard copy along with a soft copy through flash-drive) to the address of the undersigned (in person, or by courier mail) **by 30 December 2025 on or before 13:00 hours** Bangladesh Standard Time (BST).
- The Procuring Entity (PE) reserves the right to accept or reject any or all EOIs without assigning any reason whatsoever.

(Md. Mashiar Rahman)
Deputy Managing Director

Palli Karma-Sahayak Foundation (PKSF)

PKSF Bhaban-1, Plot: E-4/B, Agargaon Administrative Area, Sher-e-Bangla Nagar, Dhaka-1207

Tel: 88-02-222218331-33; E-mail: smartprocure.pksf@gmail.com

Invitation for ENLISTMENT

Ref No: BCB/Admin/T&PC/2025/914

Date: 11th December, 2025

The Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) hereby invites sealed applications from eligible and bonafide Suppliers, Manufacturers, Sole Agents, Distributors, Wholesalers, Contractors, Event Management Companies, and Service Providers operating within Bangladesh for enlistment in the following Groups for a period of **03 (Three)** years:

Sl No.	Group	Category of Products / Services
1	A	Grounds Equipment & Accessories Suppliers
2	B	Suppliers of Coir Mat and Boundary Rope
3	C	Pitch Clay
4	D	Soil
5	E	Civil, Sanitary & Electrical Works
6	F	Furniture & Interior Decoration
7	G	A/C Repair & Maintenance Service
8	H	Decorator Service
9	I	IT Equipment & Accessories Supplier and Repair & Maintenance Service
10	J	Security Equipments
11	K	Event Management
12	L	Branding & Advertising
13	M	Catering Service
14	N	General Hospitality (Hotel & Accommodation)
15	O	Travel Agent (Domestic & International)
16	P	Transport Service
17	Q	Automobile Maintenance
18	R	Automobile Accessories
19	S	Automobile Parts & Accessories Suppliers.
20	T	Printing & Artwork
21	U	Courier Service (Domestic & International)
22	V	Advertising Firm (Print, Electronic & Web)
23	W	Home & Office Appliances (Electrical)
24	X	Cleaning Service
25	Y	Security Service
26	Z	Insurance Service
27	AA	Pharmaceuticals, Medical Equipment & Accessories Suppliers
28	AB	General Suppliers
29	AC	C&F Agents / Freight Forwarder
30	AD	Sports Goods & Attires
31	AE	Trophies, Mementos, Souvenirs and Other Gift Items
32	AF	Tailors (Formal Attire)

Non-Eligibility :

- Companies related to Tobacco, Alcohol (Surrogated & Non-Surrogated), Betting, Online Betting shall not be eligible to participate in the invitation process.
- Any person(s) or entities / companies having any Conflict of interest and/or with an existing unresolved dispute (i.e. Financial, Disciplinary and any other issues) with the BCB on a point of law or fact shall also be ineligible to participate in the invitation process.

The following documents must be submitted along with the application :

- Updated Trade License, Business Identification Number (BIN), TIN Certificate, Proof of Submission of Income Tax Return (PSR) and Income Tax return acknowledgement copy.
- Company Profile and Individual Directors' / Owners' Profile.
- Experience/Performance Certificate along with a list and contact details of existing clients.
- Sole Agency / Dealership / Distributorship Certificate and price list (if applicable) of products.
- Name of the Proprietor / Partner / Managing Director / CEO and the Key Person with Business Address, Telephone / Mobile / E-mail.
- Bank Solvency Certificate along with Bank Statement (Minimum 06 (Six) months).
- Memorandum of Association and Articles of Association along with Certificate of Incorporation, Schedule-X and Schedule-XII.
- Notarized Consortium Agreement (In case of consortium).
- Recent Audited Financial Statements (In case of consortium each members audited financial statements needs to be submitted individually).
- Applicants are requested to meet the qualification criteria for each group as specified in the enlistment schedule.

Other Information :

Enlistment Schedule documents may be purchased from the BCB Finance & Accounts Department upon payment of a non-refundable fee of BDT 5,000/- (Taka Five Thousand only). The documents will be available at the BCB Management Office (2nd Floor), Sher-e-Bangla National Cricket Stadium, Mirpur, Dhaka, from Saturday to Thursday between 10:30 AM and 2:00 PM, up to and including **23 December 2025**.

Entities intending to apply for enlistment are required to deposit refundable **Earnest Money** of BDT 20,000/- (Taka Twenty Thousand only) for **each Group** along with their application, through a Pay Order made in favour of the Bangladesh Cricket Board.

Duly completed application forms, together with supporting documents and the Earnest Money (i.e., BDT 20,000/- each Group), must be submitted in the designated drop box located at the BCB Reception (1st Floor, Management Office, SBNCs, Mirpur, Dhaka) no later than **4:00 PM** on **31 December 2025**.

Pay Orders submitted by applicants who are not qualified for enlistment will be returned upon completion of the enlistment process.

Note: Each entity is permitted to be enlisted in a maximum of **02 (Two)** Groups.

The BCB reserves the right to cancel or make any changes in the terms to the entire process at any stage and to accept or reject any application for enlistment at its sole discretion, without assigning any reason whatsoever.

Chief Executive Officer
Bangladesh Cricket Board

Sher-e-Bangla National Cricket Stadium, Mirpur-2, Dhaka 1216



Emergency personnel search for victims in the rubble of two collapsed buildings in the Al Massira area of Fes, Morocco, early yesterday. The four-storey buildings collapsed, killing at least 22 people, the state news agency said. Sixteen others were wounded as searches for “other people who may be buried under the rubble” were ongoing. The Fes prosecutor’s office said in a statement, there had been a family celebration in one of the buildings at the time of the collapse while the other was unoccupied.

PHOTO: AFP

RESOLUTION TO BAN PTI, IMRAN KHAN Pakistan ruling party, PTI trade fresh barbs

DAWN ONLINE

War of words between members of the Pakistan’s ruling PML-N and the PTI continued yesterday, with Coordinator to the Prime Minister on Information for Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Affairs Ikhtiar Wali Khan saying that “things have reached a point of no return”, while PTI chairman Barrister Gohar Ali stressed that “better sense should prevail”.

In a press conference held yesterday, Wali assailed the PTI for its recent actions, warning the party, “We have tolerated you with much grace and for the sake of democracy; however, things have now reached a point of no return, no mercy and no tolerance.”

“All doors to talks are now closed,” Wali said. PTI Chairman Gohar, speaking

to the media yesterday, objected to the resolution, warning that the government was attempting to “pitch federating units against each other.”

On Tuesday, the Punjab Assembly adopted a resolution to ban incarcerated PTI founder and former prime minister Imran Khan and his party for being “anti-state”.

“You are isolating a major political party. Does removing them from due process save democracy?” the PTI chairman asked.

“I said it to them yesterday as well. This is not business, you can not minus one, and be left with another.

“If we are removed, then they will not be left either.”

“If this continues, then things will get out of control within a month,” he added.

THAI-CAMBODIA BORDER CLASHES 500,000 flee to shelters

AGENCIES

Half a million evacuees in Cambodia and Thailand were sheltering in pagodas, schools and other safe havens yesterday after fleeing fresh fighting in a century-old border dispute in which US President Donald Trump has vowed to again intercede.

Five Thai soldiers and seven Cambodian civilians have been killed in the latest fighting, officials said, while more than 500,000 people have fled border regions near where jets, tanks and drones were waging battle.

AFP journalists in northwestern Cambodia’s Samraong town yesterday morning heard the blasts of incoming artillery from the direction of centuries-old temples in disputed border areas.

By the afternoon, hundreds of families were leaving a shelter at a pagoda near Samraong where they had been staying since Monday.

“Authorities say it is not safe anymore,” said Seut Soeung, 30, as she rested alongside a road with her family and vehicles passed by

loaded with people, dogs and bags of clothes.

A policeman who asked not to be named said the displaced families were being evacuated from the temple grounds due to safety

» Death toll hits 12; Trump renews vow to intercede

» Conflict expanded to five provinces of both countries

» Thailand says third party should not initiate talks

concerns after a few Thai jets flew nearby.

Thailand and Cambodia dispute the colonial-era demarcation of their 800-kilometre frontier, where competing claims to historic temples have spilled over into armed conflict.

This week’s clashes are the deadliest since five days of fighting in July that killed dozens and displaced around 300,000 before a shaky truce was agreed, following

intervention by Trump.

Both sides blame each other for instigating the reignited conflict, which has expanded to five provinces of both Thailand and Cambodia, according to an AFP tally of official accounts.

Thai defence ministry spokesperson Surasant Kongsiri told reporters yesterday that more than 400,000 civilians have been evacuated to shelters.

Asked about the prospect of further intervention by Trump, a Thai government spokesperson said there had been no talks with him so far, while Bangkok’s position was that negotiations should not be initiated by a third party.

Yesterday, Cambodia withdrew its athletes from the Southeast Asian Games in Thailand, citing safety reasons and their families’ concern, reports Reuters.

Thailand’s military said BM-21 rockets fired by Cambodian forces landed near the Phanom Dong Rak Hospital in Surin district yesterday, forcing the evacuation of patients and staff to a shelter.

Democracies must fight for freedom Says Nobel laureate Machado

REUTERS, Oslo

Democracies must be prepared to fight for freedom in order to survive, Nobel Peace Prize laureate Maria Corina Machado said yesterday, in a speech delivered by her daughter

during a ceremony Machado could not attend.

The Venezuelan opposition leader said prize held profound significance, not only for her country but for world. “It reminds the world that democracy is essential to peace,” she said, via her

daughter Ana Corina Sosa Machado.

“And the most important, the lesson Venezuelans can share ...forged on a long and difficult path: if we want democracy, we must be prepared to fight for freedom.”

NCP unveils 125 candidates

FROM PAGE 1

previous contender. Jamaat has primarily selected Ashraful Haque for the seat.

NCP nominated its Senior Joint Member Secretary Tasnim Jara for Dhaka-9, where former Chhatra Dal general secretary Habibur Rashid Habib will run as a first-time candidate.

BNP had kept this seat open amid discussions that it might be allocated to Jara, who has already begun her campaign on social media.

Jamaat picked Kabir Ahmed, central vice-president of Bangladesh Workers Welfare Federation, as its candidate for Dhaka-9.

NCP Senior Joint Member Secretary Nahida Sarwar Niva will contest Dhaka-12, where BNP has fielded Saiful Alam Nirob, former president of Dhaka City North BNP and a 2018 candidate. Jamaat picked its central leader Saiful Alam Khan Milon for the seat.

Sarjis Alam and Hasnat Abdullah, two NCP chief organisers (north and south), will contest from their home constituencies – Sarjis from Panchagarh-1 and Hasnat from Cumilla-4. Senior Joint Chief Coordinator Abdul Hannan Masud will run from Noakhali-6.

“We have published the first list with names for 125 seats. More names will be announced in phases,” Nahid told a press conference at the party’s temporary office in Bangla Motor yesterday.

He said the list reflects the spirit of the mass uprising, aiming to validate ongoing reforms rather than merely pursue power.

The list prioritises public participation, diversity, and the representation of those active in the uprising, he added.

“NCP plans to nominate candidates in all 300 constituencies, after which discussions with alliance partners will take place.”

The party has not yet fielded a candidate for Dhaka-10. Nahid said it could not identify a suitable nominee for the seat.

According to sources, NCP may nominate LGRD Adviser Asif Mahmud Shojib Bhuyain, who resigned from the advisory council yesterday and recently became a voter in the constituency.

BNP nominated its Executive Committee member Sheikh Rabiul Alam, who contested the 2018 polls from Dhaka-10, while Jamaat picked Supreme Court lawyer Jashim Uddin Sarkar.

Although NCP leaders previously said they would not field candidates in seats

where BNP Chairperson Khaleida Zia would contest – one of which is Dinajpur-3 – out of respect, the party has still nominated HM Shamsul Muktadir there.

WOMEN CANDIDATES

Fourteen women leaders and activists of NCP were nominated for seats across the country.

Though the party’s Senior Joint Convener Samantha Sharmin was not on the list, she has purchased a nomination form for Bhola-1.

Apart from Jara and Niva, the other nominees are Tajnuva Zabin (Dhaka-17); Nabila Tasnid (Dhaka-20); Monira Sharmin (Naogaon-5); Dilshana Parul (Sirajganj-3); Mahmuda Mitu (Jhalakathi-1); Dyuti Aranya Chowdhury (Sirajganj-4); Tanha Shanta (Mymensingh-11); Syeda Nilima Dola (Faridpur-3); Israt Jahan Bindu (Chandpur-2); Advocate Humayra Noor (Noakhali-5); Shagufta Bushra Mishma (Chattogram-10); and Advocate Monjila Jhuma (Khagrachhari).

So far, NCP has fielded the highest number of women candidates.

BNP has nominated 11 women, including Khaleida Zia. Jamaat has yet to announce its list, though it has already picked

candidates in most seats – none of them women.

At yesterday’s press conference, Nahid said, “Our list includes professionals, women, minorities, expatriates, and youth leaders. We have ensured gender balance and inclusion.”

Tasnim Jara, also member-secretary of the party’s Election Steering Committee, said the NCP introduced a modernised nomination process to ensure accessibility for “qualified and community-minded citizens”.

“Over 1,500 applications were submitted nationwide,” she said. “We hope this preliminary list will bring in many new and unconventional faces. The era of politics dominated by corrupt powerbrokers must end.”

Nasiruddin Patwary said, “If any nominee is found involved in corruption, extortion, criminal activity, or loan default, their candidacy will be cancelled immediately upon public complaint.”

He added that all candidates must strictly follow the Election Commission’s electoral guidelines once the schedule is announced, including the removal of unauthorised posters and adherence to financial rules.

People's Republic of Bangladesh

Metropolitan Senior Special Judge Court, Dhaka.

Present: Mr. Md. Sabbir Faiz
(Metro Sessions Judge)

Metropolitan Senior Special Judge, Dhaka.

Permission Petition No.1162/2025

Order No.- 01, Date: 18-11-2025

Investigation officer Mr. Md. Nafizur Rahman, BP no.9217199319, Sub-inspector of Police, Financial Crime, Organized Crime, CID, Bangladesh Police, Dhaka submitted a petition under memo no-CI/ Financial Crime/8246, dated-17.11.2025, Source Memo-CI/Financial Crime/BFIU/ Verification/31-2025/2562, dated 09/07/2025, under sections 4(2) of the Money Laundering Prevention Act, 2012(ammendment-2015) to freeze assets of accused Ms. Imrana Zaman Chowdhury NID 7319798984, number of Meghna Bank's Share 23,212,355, Steadfast Management Trading Ltd. (Mr. Uthpal Paul, managing director, NID 1594121442626) number of Meghna Bank's Share 23,251,100 and others under section 14(1) of the Mony Laundering Prevention Act, 2012.

The petition is taken up for hearing,

Heard learned Additional Public Prosecutor and gone through the petition as well as the records. It is found that an enquiry is undergoing against the aforesaid alleged accused Ms. Imrana Zaman Chowdhury NID 7319798984, holding number of Meghna Bank's Share 23,212,355, Steadfast Management Trading Ltd. (Mr. Uthpal Paul, managing director, NID 1594121442626) holding number of Meghna Bank's Share 23,251,100 and others under section 14(1) of the Mony Laundering Prevention Act, 2012.

It appears from the record that the alleged offender has acquired huge amount of illegal wealth beyond their known source of income by adopting illegal means and if those assets are not attached and freezed those assets will be laundered or transfered and those can not be possible to be forfeited after trial which will frustrate this case. Hence those assets need to be freezed.

Considering the facts and circumstances, I am convinced to allow the petition submitted by Investigation officer Mr. Md. Nafizur Rahman, BP no.9217199319, Sub-inspector of Police, Financial Crime, Organized Crime, CID, Bangladesh Police, Dhaka and accordingly the assets as mentioned in the petition are hereby freezed until further order as per section 14(1) of the Money Laundering Prevention Act, 2012.

It is hereby further ordered that the copy of this order be issued to the Chairman, Bangladesh Securities and Exchange Commission, E-6/C, Agargaon, Sher-e-Banglanagar, Dhaka to the effect that while the freezing order is in effect regarding the said accounts; the account holders will not be allowed to withdraw any money. But they will be at liberty to deposit only.

Let this order be published in the Government Official Gazette along with widely circulated one daily Bengali and one daily English newspaper under section 14(3) of the Money Laundering Prevention Act, 2012 for information of the citizens at large.

Let this order along with the photy copy of the application be sent to Investigation officer Mr. Md. Nafizur Rahman, BP no.9217199319, Sub-inspector of Police, Financial Crime, Organized Crime, CID, Bangladesh Police, Dhaka and Publication department, Tejgaon, Dhaka; Chairman, Bangladesh Securities and Exchange Commission, E-6/C, Agargaon, Sher-e-Banglanagar, Dhaka and other concerned authorities for necessary action.

Inform all concerned Authorities at once.

Directed & Corrected by me.

Sd/-
Metro. Sen. Spl Judge, Dhaka:
Memo Number: ১৮১৮৮(৪)১৮

Sd/-
(Md. Sabbir Faiz)
Metro. Senior Special Judge, Dhaka.
Date: ১৮/১১/২০২৫

GD-2713

Persistence of human rights abuse alarming

Reforms within rule-of-law institutions must occur now, not later

Human rights organisations have again painted a sobering picture of the state of rights in Bangladesh. According to a new report by the Human Rights Support Society, at least 156 people were killed and 242 injured in 276 incidents of mob violence up to November this year, averaging around 14 deaths every month. Meanwhile, at least 1,909 women and girls were subjected to sexual violence, of whom 789 were raped, with more than half of the victims being minors. In a separate estimate, Ain o Salish Kendra has said that 29 people were killed extrajudicially or died as a result of torture in police custody, while 28 convicts and 55 under-trial prisoners died in jail. Political and non-political murders have also continued. The media has recorded numerous false murder cases filed against journalists and individuals allegedly associated with the previous regime.

These developments reinforce concerns that the interim government has not been able to curb some of the most severe forms of human rights violations as expected. It is true that the government has taken some commendable steps to end enforced disappearances, including passing an ordinance to punish violators and initiating legal action against some of the accused. But there have been many other violations taking place right under its nose, that should have prompted decisive intervention. It did not.

We must ask, for instance, why custodial deaths and torture continue under a government that emerged from an uprising promising an end to state repression. The continuation of this trend shows that although an autocratic regime has been removed, remnants of its abusive practices remain embedded within state machinery. Arbitrary arrests, torture, and deaths in custody persist because of a lack of accountability for law enforcement and security personnel. True, the long-awaited police commission has been approved through an ordinance recently, promising to curtail impunity and ensure transparency. But when will such reforms actually materialise?

Given the reality illustrated by the above figures, we urge the government to initiate independent investigations into all extrajudicial and custodial deaths and establish genuine accountability mechanisms within law enforcement agencies. It should be pointed out that the persistence of mob violence, often carried out in the name of religion, is largely due to the indifference or half-hearted attempts of the government, which must be addressed. It must identify both instigators and participants in these horrific crimes and ensure they face exemplary punishment. Of equal concern has been its inability to address the growing misogyny and violence against women, both in public and online. The government must provide stronger security for women in public spaces and take firm action against violence within private spheres. Online abuse must also be tackled through better training for law enforcers so they can effectively identify and act against perpetrators.

With the elections around the corner, concerns are mounting that the law and order situation may deteriorate further. So, the government must take up the urgent task of training and equipping law enforcers properly so that they act promptly, effectively, and sincerely in upholding human rights.

Make tobacco products pricier

Study finds its economic losses far exceed revenue

We are deeply concerned by the staggering economic toll of tobacco use and production in Bangladesh. A new study by the Institute of Health Economics at Dhaka University shows that the losses caused by tobacco far exceed the revenue it generates. According to the findings, tobacco cost the country Tk 87,544 crore last year, more than double the approximate Tk 40,000 crore earned from tobacco taxes in FY 2023–24. The study further reveals that, far from contributing to the economy, tobacco depletes national resources, intensifies health crises, and accelerates environmental degradation.

According to a recent World Health Organization report, although tobacco use in Bangladesh has declined over the past 15 years, it still exceeds both the global and South-East Asia regional averages, an alarming reality that demands urgent intervention. Another study by Bangladesh Medical University (BMU) found that the slow pace at which tobacco use is decreasing in the country will make it difficult to achieve the UN-set target of reducing consumption by 40 percent by 2030. Against this backdrop, the new findings underscore that the government must strengthen its tobacco-control policies and take decisive action to curb consumption.

Reportedly, health-related costs alone amounted to Tk 73,063 crore, including Tk 30,771 crore in direct medical expenses and Tk 42,292 crore in productivity losses. Added to this are environmental damages worth Tk 14,525 crore—resulting from marine pollution, greenhouse gas emissions, waste clean-up, deforestation, and other ecological harms linked to tobacco cultivation and manufacturing.

Equally troubling is the availability of tobacco, particularly to the youth. A study, conducted by the Power and Participation Research Centre (PPRC) on 121 schools across four divisions, found an average of 5.5 tobacco points of sale (POS) within 100 metres of each school. Nearly 70 percent of these POSs advertised tobacco products, while 21 percent actively promoted them to attract students. Moreover, the widespread sale of flavoured cigarettes and single sticks demonstrates the industry's aggression in targeting children. The placement of tobacco beside candies and toys in 66 percent of shops further exposes the manipulative marketing tactics at play.

The government must, therefore, impose a comprehensive ban on POS advertising, prohibit flavoured cigarettes, and end single stick sales. Taxes on tobacco products must be substantially increased to create real deterrence. Without decisive action, the country will continue to lose far more than it gains from this industry. Most importantly, protecting the youth is a national responsibility which should be backed by stronger laws and a more effective tax structure that makes tobacco products less affordable.

Stalled reforms leave journalists exposed amid poll security risks



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

KAMAL AHMED

As the country moves towards the much-anticipated 2026 general election—promised to be an exemplary one by the interim government led by Professor Muhammad Yunus—early signs of political intolerance and toxicity have become increasingly alarming. Amid this volatility, journalists are raising concerns about a hostile reporting environment, ranging from online harassment to physical threats, even at this early stage of election coverage. A new study, “High Risks, Low Preparedness: Journalist Safety in 2026 Elections,” reveals that an overwhelming 89 percent of journalists expect to face physical assault while covering the polls.

Based on a survey of 201 journalists across 19 districts, the research paints a picture of a deeply polarised and volatile landscape ahead. It shows that 89 percent of journalists anticipate high levels of physical violence; 76 percent expect verbal harassment, while 71 percent fear intimidation. The outlook appears even more troubling for women journalists: 50 percent fear sexual harassment, and 40 percent fear sexual assault during election-related reporting.

An especially disturbing trend is the widening scope of attacks on the press, extending beyond the field to newsrooms and media outlets themselves. Whether the threats originate from political actors, criminal groups, or law enforcement agencies, the intent appears consistent: to silence the media from exposing wrongdoing, abuses of power, violations of the law, and other conduct that undermines a fair electoral environment.

This was not the expectation. At least a dozen journalists spoke about their ordeals at the event marking the publication of the study report, and half of them were women, mostly working in broadcast media, which made them easily recognisable and exposed to increased vulnerability.

They are being targeted both offline and online, and the online vitriol is quite offensive, degrading, and ferocious.

The interim government had pledged to undertake reforms to ensure a “free, robust, and objective media.” To that end, it established a commission in November 2024 and received its report and recommendations on March 22 this year. Since then, Information Adviser Mahfuj Alam has



VISUAL: ANWAR SOHEL

repeatedly stated that the government is implementing the proposed reforms—most importantly, an act to safeguard journalists in the course of their work. On September 28, he told a seminar that the government would enact the Journalist Protection Act within two to three months “at any cost.”

The proposed Journalism Protection Act and the setting up of a national media commission were the two most significant steps the reform commission recommended. It received strong and wider support not only from within the media industry but also from political parties of all colours as well as the international community. Notably, Unesco offered its support in implementing this framework, which would improve

journalists’ security and ensure their freedom.

Yet no such ordinance has been issued to date. Instead, we have learned that a special committee of advisers was formed—and later reconstituted—to examine the reform commission’s recommendations and identify those that could be implemented with minimal difficulty. Reliable sources indicate significant resistance to enacting the proposed Journalist Protection Act, and the advisers’ committee is inclined to ditch it. Some bureaucrats have argued that a strengthened National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) could provide sufficient protection for journalists under threat, even though NHRC’s capacity, even after revamping it following enactment of a new ordinance, remains limited in scope, lacking any power to award

According to informed sources, the advisers’ committee’s only notable initiative so far is a move to grant autonomy to Bangladesh Television (BTV)—an effort reportedly facing resistance from BTV employees and sections of the bureaucracy. This proposal also runs counter to the reform commission’s recommendation to merge Bangladesh Television, Bangladesh Betar, and Bangladesh Sangbad Sangstha (BSS) into an autonomous national broadcasting organisation. Such a merger would enhance independence, improve efficiency, and yield significant savings for the public exchequer.

Most of the remaining 21 broader reform measures appear to have been consigned to cold storage. Among journalists, the greatest frustration stems from the government’s failure to reform the financial foundations of the media industry. Many outlets lack economic viability and fail to provide adequate salaries and benefits, leaving journalists and media outlets vulnerable to pressure from powerful corporate, political, and other influential actors.

The study on journalist safety in the 2026 elections serves as a stark reminder that had the interim government fulfilled its commitment to enact the Journalist Protection Act in time, many attacks might have been prevented—or at least, a clear warning would have been sent to potential perpetrators that impunity would no longer be tolerated. The draft law proposed by the reform commission explicitly defined the forms of abuse requiring protection, including “violence, threats, and harassment ... endangering the life and property of a journalist engaged in professional work, including criminal intimidation, harassment, molestation, surveillance, physical or mental torture, insult, obstruction of work, coercion, sexual harassment, illegal detention, enforced disappearance, and abduction.”

Our deepest concern is that the interim government led by Nobel Peace Laureate Muhammad Yunus risks being held responsible for failing to prevent attacks on journalists despite its promises of a truly independent, robust, and objective media environment. There is still time to take decisive action: to enact the Journalist Protection Ordinance and establish a permanent National Media Commission.

Why our economy looks rich on Facebook but broke in real life



MIND THE GAP

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NOSHIN NAWAL

The world is warning of a looming economic downturn, yet many of us here are—scrolling, shopping, and insisting we are living our best lives, even as our mobile banking apps beg to differ. The focus remains firmly on flash sales and cashback offers. Economists globally compare the present moment to the years preceding the Great Depression, and many in Bangladesh is playing along with remarkable enthusiasm. We are a country where consumption for many has become a national identity rather than a financial act. Our GDP graphs tell one story. Our bank balances tell another, and our online personas tell a third story entirely, one usually involving brunch.

Back in the 1920s, Americans often spent money they did not have because keeping up appearances mattered more than financial stability. In Bangladesh, many of us have turned this instinct into an art form. Whether it is an Eid outfit, imported skincare, a birthday dinner in Gulshan, or a pair of trainers costing more than a month’s rent in Mirpur, some of us buy to belong. We buy to feel modern. We buy because everyone else is buying—and God forbid someone thinks we are not doing well. And, much like the 1920s, Bangladesh has found its own version of mass debt normalisation. Our

grandparents saved cash in tin trunks. We save screenshots of instalment plans. The rise of buy-now-pay-later culture worldwide has been localised here through loan apps, informal credit, and bKash borrowing. Debt has become invisible, convenient, and socially acceptable.

But invisibility does not mean harmlessness. When a significant share of young people in Dhaka tend to juggle delayed payments, digital loans, and lifestyle expectations shaped by TikTok, you do not have a consumption boom—you have a brewing fragility. Around 97 percent of Gen Z says social media influences what they buy. The remaining three percent have never seen their Explore page. Most of these Bangladeshis seemed to be buying under pressure, not capacity, and pressure is far more dangerous. Pressure pushes a lower-middle-income household to keep up with upper-middle-class spending to prove they are doing “fine.” Pressure convinces a 24-year-old to spend half her salary on a handbag she cannot afford because everyone else in her office carries one. Pressure tells people to buy the lifestyle first and figure out the finances later.

The illusion of stability is maintained through small, delayed payments that create artificial demand. Back then, instalment plans

made people feel richer than they were. Today, loan apps do the same job quietly, efficiently, and without the inconvenience of paperwork. Instalments are the new meditation. Debt is the new normal. Shame is the only thing no one is willing to put on instalment.

Meanwhile, the actual economy is under strain. Inflation remains high.

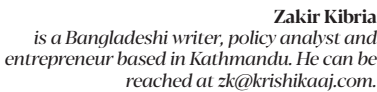
The illusion of stability is maintained through small, delayed payments that create artificial demand. Back then, instalment plans made people feel richer than they were. Today, loan apps do the same job quietly, efficiently, and without the inconvenience of paperwork. Instalments are the new meditation. Debt is the new normal. Shame is the only thing no one is willing to put on instalment.

The dollar is volatile. Imports are expensive. Banks are wobbling. And yet our social media feeds resemble a country on the verge of hosting Fashion Week. If the West has New York Fashion Week, then Bangladesh has Instagram, where the vibrant activity drowns out the warnings. The bigger danger is structural. Today’s economy relies heavily on a few dominant corporations. In Bangladesh, everything from food to fintech to mobile banking to consumer imports is controlled by a

small circle of powerful players. When one stumbles, the shock spreads quickly. The system looks stable only because debt wears excellent make-up.

The truth is simple: Bangladesh is living in a period of aspiration without stability. A generation raised on global content and local constraints is trying to merge two incompatible realities. They have a caviar taste in an economy that frequently offers tap water. They have dreams shaped by YouTube and salaries shaped by budget speeches. The mismatch is not a moral failure; it is an economic one. This is not a call for austerity. It is a call for awareness. A nation cannot rely on borrowed confidence forever. Households cannot outsource their futures to instalment plans. And young people cannot build financial security on the shaky foundation of trends that expire faster than your bKash balance on the 29th of the month.

If we continue mirroring the worst patterns of the global economy, we may discover the consequences the hard way. The Great Depression did not begin with one dramatic moment. It began with millions of small decisions layered upon each other until the system cracked. Bangladesh still has time to step back from that cliff. But that requires honesty about where our economy stands, how our society consumes, and why appearances have become more important than affordability. Because the world of easy instalments and digital glamour may look modern, but underneath, it carries the same fragility that history has already warned us about. And history, unlike debt collectors, never sends just one reminder.

**ZAKIR KIBRIA**

Dhaka's suffocating reality stems directly from policy failures that treated urban planning as an obstacle, not a necessity. The relaxation of building regulations that began decades ago culminated in the introduction of Floor Area Ratio (FAR) regulations in 2008, which created a perfect storm of vertical congestion without the corresponding infrastructure to support it. The result is a

The cost of this chaos is quantified in brutal metrics that should shock our collective conscience. Our economy bleeds \$4.4 billion annually from traffic congestion alone, a massive drain on national productivity that the World Bank has repeatedly flagged. In global liveability rankings, our capital sits near the very bottom, at 171st out of 173 cities, barely surpassing active war zones. Our natural lifeblood, the rivers, are poisoned. The Buriganga's average dissolved oxygen levels have plummeted to zero in dry seasons, far below the 6.5 milligrams per litre required for a healthy aquatic ecosystem, symbolising a city choking on its own waste. The relentless centralisation of the nation's administration, commerce, and hope into one overwhelmed metropolis has created what urban expert Adnan Morshed calls a state of *gadagadi*—a phenomenon of people living in extreme congestion without the most basic urban services.

The solution, however, is not to resist

density but to transform it from a burden into our greatest asset. The blueprint exists in cities that have turned similar challenges into triumphs. Tokyo and Hong Kong demonstrate that high population concentrations can produce remarkable economic dynamism and sustainability when properly managed. Tokyo's wards, despite their densities, remain highly liveable through meticulous planning, efficient mobility, and an equitable



FILE PHOTO: **ANISUR RAHMAN**

distribution of amenities. This is the model of “good density”—a revolutionary framework for Dhaka where people live in compact, affordable homes with easy access to schools, clinics, work, and parks, all within a

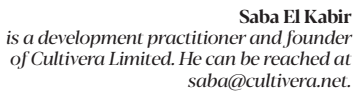
Transforming this vision into reality demands more than technical master plans; it requires a moon-shot level of political will and a fundamental rethinking of urban governance. The World Bank has explicitly

called on Bangladesh to address “planned urbanisation” as a core reform to sustain growth and job creation. This begins with reversing the perverse incentive structures that make violating rules more profitable than

complying with them. We must champion ward-based development, ensuring each of Dhaka's 129 wards becomes a self-contained unit with equitable access to parks, schools, and markets. Our promising metro rail system must be integrated with protected walkways and cycling lanes, recognising that the majority of Dhaka's commuters travel on foot. Simultaneously, we must launch an environmental resurrection, restoring the blue network of canals and rivers that once defined this city, to combat the urban heat island effect that has seen temperatures in many areas soar to a blistering 40.7 degrees Celsius.

The International Monetary Fund acknowledges Bangladesh's "ambitious goals for achieving environmentally sustainable economic growth," but warns that "further efforts are needed to rapidly scale up resources." This is the defining challenge of our generation. The cost of fixing Dhaka today, while immense, will be a mere fraction of the catastrophic economic, social, and environmental costs we will inevitably face if we fail to act. We must immediately protect our natural systems, halt the filling of waterways, and launch an emergency programme to restore the rivers surrounding Dhaka. We must implement transit-oriented development that prioritises people over vehicles. And crucially, we must embrace genuine participatory governance, building public trust by giving communities a direct voice in the decisions that shape their neighbourhoods. The United Nations reminds us that inclusive urbanisation can unlock transformative pathways for climate action and economic growth. We can continue to be victims of a chaotic fate of our own doing, or we can become the architects of a livable, sustainable, and economically vibrant city worthy of its people. The survival of our nation's ambition depends on the choice we make today.

Collapse of Hasinomics and the fight for real growth



SABA EL KABIR

As we move forward, we must confront the wrong in its totality. Yet while the horror was visceral, the remedy cannot be. The challenge before us is not emotional. It is structural.

Bangladesh's production base remained fundamentally weak because both of the main sectors, agriculture and RMG, were stuck in a low-productivity equilibrium. Agriculture, still employing nearly 40 percent of the labour force, consistently grew at a slower pace than inflation. For over a decade, rural incomes declined in real terms even as GDP increased. When a sector that employs the majority of labour produces less output per worker, transformation becomes mathematically impossible.

What makes this more tragic is what never occurred. Peer economies built the basic infrastructure of modern agriculture: cold chains, storage ecosystems, agro-processing hubs, salinity-resistant seeds, and digital commodity platforms. Bangladesh built none of these at a meaningful scale. Capital that should have funded this transition was diverted into choreographed megaprojects and loan defaults.

The RMG sector followed identical logic. Comparable economies such

Meanwhile, Bangladesh's labour productivity stagnated because capital never returned to the factory floor. Politically connected conglomerates understood that higher returns lay in loan-capture, land speculation, and public contracts rather than genuine industrial upgrading. By 2024, this diversion had produced a Tk 7.56 lakh crore distressed-asset crater—capital that should have financed innovation and diversification.

The clearest indicator of this extraction-driven stagnation lies in wages. In 2024, real wages fell across the board: two percent for low-skilled workers, 0.5 percent for high-skilled. Despite rising exports, wages declined because productivity did not rise. The economy generated two kinds of jobs: low-skill sewing line roles or high-skill managerial positions often filled by foreign-educated elites. Domestic graduates were trapped in the “missing middle”: overeducated for factories, underprepared for elite roles, and excluded by insider networks. That missing middle is not a theoretical abstraction; it is the very real absence of the technicians, supervisors, digital operators, and process controllers that every modern industrial economy needs to thrive.

By 2024, less than one percent of depositors, i.e. 1,13,586 accounts controlled 43.35 percent of all bank deposits with at least Tk 1 crore in the accounts. This was no statistical quirk; it was the political settlement in full display. The economy was engineered to pool capital at the top, not to circulate it through SMEs, innovators, or workers. SMEs were not starved by accident, but by design.

This top-heavy economy left bottom-of-the-pyramid communities exposed to climate change.

Hasinomics did not collapse because it was authoritarian; it collapsed because it destroyed the engines of sustainable development. It hollowed out the structural drivers of productivity, mobility, and resilience. By 2024, these fractures converged into a complete blockade on social mobility, ultimately triggering the political explosion we witnessed.

destroyed land, savings, and the possibility of intergenerational progress. Instead of channelling resources into adaptation—embankments, drainage, green infrastructure, community shelters—national wealth continued flowing upwards through the perfected extraction mechanism.

The extraction machine operated at peak efficiency. First, politically connected groups received enormous loans from state and private banks, often without meaningful collateral or even a door to hang their signboard above. Second, those loans were systematically defaulted, creating a ballooning distressed-asset hole. Third, when banks began to falter, the state intervened with taxpayer funds to recapitalise them—turning private theft into public liability. Fourth, the same networks siphoned money abroad—an estimated \$16 billion annually—draining the country of the investment capital needed for industrial upgrading. Fifth, inflated megaprojects and politically allocated contracts provided an additional rent pipeline. Finally, the liquidity that remained inside the country pooled at the very top. This was not mismanagement—it was a weaponised political economy brutally calibrated

for extraction.

But we must stop attributing novelty to Hasinomics. Its genius lay in perfecting an extractive machinery with roots traceable to colonial administration—centralised, coercive, and designed to drain. Just because the regime has fallen, it does not follow that there

machine has been destroyed.

A sustainable development strategy must begin with a simple and non-negotiable principle: growth must be productive, inclusive, and resilient. That means diversifying beyond low-value sectors, building middle-skill industries, investing in community-level climate adaptation,

and rewiring finance so that capital circulates through the real economy rather than escaping it.

The window of Bangladesh's demographic dividend closes by the mid-2030s. Time is not on our side. If we hesitate, the system will revert. We would be another generation that wasted a generational opportunity.

গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার

বিভাগীয় বন কর্মকর্তার কার্যালয়

পার্বত্য চট্টগ্রাম দক্ষিণ বন বিভাগ

রাশামাটি

দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি নং-০৪ অব ২০২৫-২৬

তারিখঃ ০৯/১২/২০২৫খ্রিঃ

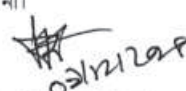
জম্বকৃত/বিবিধভাবে আহরিত বনজম্বব্য বিক্রয়ের পুনঃদরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি

এতদ্বারা সর্বসাধারণের অবগতির জন্য জানানো যাচ্ছে যে, পার্বত্য চট্টগ্রাম দক্ষিণ বন বিভাগীয় রাশামাটি সদর রেঞ্জসহ বিভিন্ন রেঞ্জ/বিট/স্টেশন অফিস প্রাঙ্গণে জম্বকৃত/বড়পেড়া/বিবিধ উপায়ে আহরিত লট আকারে মজুদ সেগুন ও বিবিধ প্রজাতির বনজম্বব্য/কাঠসমূহ Sealed Tender এর মাধ্যমে বিক্রয়ের নিমিত্তে প্রকৃত ব্যবসায়ীর নিকট হতে সীলবদ্ধ খামে নিম্নবর্ণিত শর্তাধীনে দরপত্র আহ্বান করা যাচ্ছে। দরপত্র ও লট সম্পর্কীয় (লেটের পরিমাণ, অবস্থান, অবস্থান ইত্যাদি) যাবতীয় জাতব্য বিষয়বলী নিম্নস্বাক্ষরকারীর দপ্তর; রেঞ্জ কর্মকর্তা, রাশামাটি সদর রেঞ্জ/কাপ্তাই রেঞ্জ/কর্ণফুলী রেঞ্জ অফিস এবং স্টেশন কর্মকর্তা, বরকল/বড়ইছড়ি/ঘাগড়া/ রাইংথিয়ংমুখ বনশুল্ক ও পরিদপ্তর ফাঁড়ি অফিস হতে অফিস চলাকালীন সময়ে দেখতে ও জানতে পারা যাবে।

ক্রঃ নং	সিডিউল ক্রয়ের সর্বশেষ সময়	দরপত্র দাখিলের তারিখ ও সময়	সিডিউল বিক্রয়ের স্থান	যে স্থানে দরপত্র গ্রহণ করা হবে	দরপত্র খোলার সময় ও স্থান
০১	৩০/১২/২০২৫খ্রিঃ অফিস চলাকালীন সময় পর্যন্ত।	৩১/১২/২০২৫খ্রিঃ সকাল ১০.০০ ঘটিকা হতে দুপুর ১.৩০ ঘটিকা পর্যন্ত।	রেঞ্জ কর্মকর্তার কার্যালয়- ১। রাশামাটি সদর রেঞ্জ- ২। কর্ণফুলী রেঞ্জ, কাপ্তাই ৩। কাপ্তাই রেঞ্জ, কাপ্তাই	১। জেলা প্রশাসকের কার্যালয়, রাশামাটি ২। পুলিশ সুপারের কার্যালয়, রাশামাটি ৩। বিভাগীয় বন কর্মকর্তার কার্যালয়, পার্বত্য চট্টগ্রাম দক্ষিণ বন বিভাগ, রাশামাটি	৩১/১২/২০২৫খ্রিঃ দুপুর ২.৩০ ঘটিকা। বিভাগীয় বন কর্মকর্তার কার্যালয়, পার্বত্য চট্টগ্রাম দক্ষিণ বন বিভাগ, রাশামাটি।

শর্তাবলী

- উপরোক্তিত তারিখ, সময় এবং নির্ধারিত স্থানে রক্ষিত দরপত্র বাজে বন্ধ খামে দরপত্র দাখিল করতে হবে।
- দরপত্রদাতাগণ দরপত্র বাজা খোলার সময় ইচ্ছা করলে উপস্থিত থাকতে পারবেন।
- নির্ধারিত সিডিউলে দরপত্র দাখিল করতে হবে। দরপত্র সিডিউল পার্বত্য চট্টগ্রাম দক্ষিণ বন বিভাগীয় রেঞ্জ কর্মকর্তা, রাশামাটি সদর রেঞ্জ, রেঞ্জ কর্মকর্তা কর্ণফুলী এবং কাপ্তাই-এর অফিস হতে প্রতিটি সিডিউল ৪০০/- (চারশত) টাকা অফেরতযোগ্য মূল্যে ৩০/১২/২০২৫খ্রিঃ তারিখ পর্যন্ত অফিস চলাকালীন সময়ে ক্রয় করা যাবে। উক্ত সময়ের পর আর কোন সিডিউল বিক্রয় করা হবে না।
- প্রতিটি গুপের জন্য পৃথক পৃথক সিডিউল ক্রয় করতে হবে। প্রতিটি গুপের বিপরীতে পৃথকভাবে দরপত্র জামানতের পে-অর্ডার/ব্যাংক ড্রাফট (এমআইসিআর) দাখিল করতে হবে।
- দরপত্রদাতাগণকে দরপত্রের সাথে নিম্নলিখিত তথ্যাদি/কাগজপত্রাদি দাখিল করতে হবেঃ
 - দরপত্র সিডিউল ক্রয়ের মূল রশিদ/ সংশ্লিষ্ট রেঞ্জ কর্মকর্তা, স্টেশন কর্মকর্তা ও ডিপো কর্মকর্তা কর্তৃক সত্যায়িত কপি।
 - প্রতিটি গুপের বিপরীতে উক্ত দরের ৫০% হারে জামানত বিভাগীয় বন কর্মকর্তা, পার্বত্য চট্টগ্রাম দক্ষিণ বন বিভাগের অনুকূলে পে-অর্ডার/ব্যাংক ড্রাফট (এমআইসিআর) (Pledged to Divisional Forest Officer, Chittagong Hill Tracts South Forest Division) মূলে দাখিল করতে হবে।
 - সদ্য তোলা পাসপোর্ট সাইজের ০২(দুই) কপি ছবি। ছবির পিছনে দরপত্রদাতার নমুনা স্বাক্ষরসহ প্রথম শ্রেণীর সরকারী কর্মকর্তা কর্তৃক সত্যায়িত।
 - জাতীয় পরিচয়পত্রের সত্যায়িত ফটোকপি।
 - প্রযোজ্য ক্ষেত্রে হালনাগাদ আয়কর পরিশোধের প্রত্যয়নপত্র/আয়কর দাখিলের প্রমাণপত্র।
 - প্রযোজ্য ক্ষেত্রে VAT রেজিস্ট্রেশন এর সত্যায়িত কপি।
 - দরপত্রের শর্তাবলী ও সিডিউলে দরপত্রদাতার স্বাক্ষর থাকতে হবে।
- উপরোক্ত ০২নং ক্রমিকের 'ক' হইতে 'ছ' পর্যন্ত শর্তে বর্ণিত রেকর্ড পত্র ব্যতীত দাখিলকৃত দরপত্র গ্রহণ করা হবে না।
- ইহাছাড়া দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তির অন্যান্য সকল শর্তাবলী অত্র দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তির শর্ত বলে গণ্য হবে।


 এস, এম, সাজ্জাদ হোসেন
 বিভাগীয় বন কর্মকর্তা
 পার্বত্য চট্টগ্রাম দক্ষিণ বন বিভাগ রাশামাটি



HBO's 'THE WHITE LOTUS' tops IMDb's 2025 series rankings

HBO's acclaimed anthology series *The White Lotus* has secured the number one position on IMDb's list of the most popular series of 2025, surpassing global hits including *Squid Game*, *Wednesday*, and *The Last of Us*.

Created by Mike White, the satirical drama first premiered on HBO in 2021 and has since captivated audiences with its sharp social commentary, dark humor, and visually stunning cinematography. IMDb's rankings placed *The Last of Us* and *Severance* in second and third.

The show has earned major Emmy recognition, with Jennifer Coolidge winning for both seasons, and features Cristobal Tapia de Veer's acclaimed score across all three seasons.

BFDC officially steps into the digital era with digitised services

DOWEL BISWAS

Bangladesh Film Development Corporation opened a new chapter on Tuesday evening, December 10, as it unveiled a fully digitised Business Automation Service alongside an upgraded Cine-Archive, a renovated sound recording studio and the restored Jharna Spot. The inauguration drew artists, technicians and policymakers from across generations, turning the BFDC premises into a rare meeting ground of hope, frustration and long-awaited reform.

Presiding over the event, Information and Broadcasting Secretary Mahbuba Farzana welcomed guests before inviting the chief guest, Mahfuj Alam, former information and broadcasting adviser to the Government. The atmosphere was part celebration, part reckoning: the industry knows this transformation has been delayed for years, and many in attendance wanted assurances that it would not stop halfway.

In his address, Mahfuj Alam did not shy away from the struggle behind the upgrades. "It was very, very difficult to come to this stage of development," he said, underscoring the challenge of allocating budget in a sector long overshadowed by competing priorities. "Automation has begun, but the governing body must ensure equal access so that no syndicate or group benefits alone."

The new Business Automation Service is designed to digitise BFDC's entire workflow — a shift that could finally move filmmakers away from the notorious paper-based delays that have slowed productions for decades. BFDC director (Technical) Mamunur Rashid explained the urgency, stating, "BFDC simply didn't have the capacity with its old labs and facilities to support today's filmmakers. This 360-degree automation system is

vital for the country's production environment." The older analogue cameras and lenses have now been placed in a small museum on the premises, signalling a symbolic break from the past.

The Cine-Archive, built on the foundation of the old Zahir Raihan Colour Lab, has been upgraded to preserve films that risked disappearing through neglect, while the renovated sound studio brings long-needed improvements for post-production.

Managing director Masuma

policymakers to ensure the reforms survive political transitions: "Please make sure development continues even after your term. The next government must carry this forward."

In response, Mahfuj Alam outlined a longer-term vision that extends beyond infrastructure. He wants BFDC to evolve into a centre for research, training and development, while large-scale shooting is shifted to a proposed Film City under a public-private partnership. "My dream is an ecosystem where any creative person is supported — from script and



PHOTO: SHEIKH MEHEDI MORSHED

Rahman Tani described the modernisation as deeply personal. "This feels like a child to me. BFDC is the birthplace of Bengali cinema, and we thank the former Adviser and the Ministry for protecting and preserving it. BFDC must become an easy home for filmmakers, actors, technicians and creative people — and we need the capacity to support them."

Yet several speakers reminded the government that upgrades alone cannot rescue the industry. Shaheen Sumon of the Chalachitra Kalyan Samity voiced a sentiment widely shared in the audience. "We have been neglected for a long time. Automation is only the first step — the sector must be strengthened further." Actor Bapparaj urged

production to distribution," he said. He also plans to revise government grant policies so that emerging directors, not established names, receive priority. "More regional films like *Shaaticup* and *Delupi* should be made. They speak to people across the country in their own language."

The evening closed with cultural performances — patriotic songs, modern music, comedy, acting and dance — echoing the many eras of Bengali cinema that shaped the crowd gathered under the winter sky. Before the programme ended, the trailer of Ahmed Hasan Sunny's upcoming feature *Ekti Rajnaitik Alap Joruri* was unveiled, drawing attention from younger filmmakers present.

WHAT'S THE HAPS

২৪তম নবীন শিল্পী চারুকলা প্রদর্শনী ২০২৫

24th Young Artist Art Exhibition 2025

১১ থেকে ২২ ডিসেম্বর ২০২৫, প্রতিদিন সকাল ১১টা থেকে রাত ৮টা

অভিনব বোলা ওটা থেকে রাত ৮টা, প্যালাটিং : ২, ৩, ৪, ৬ ও ৭, জাতীয় চিত্রশালা

১১ ডিসেম্বর ২০২৫, বুধসন্ধ্যার সময় : বিকাল ৪.০০ টা

স্থান: জাতীয় চিত্রশালা, তিলদাঘাট

চাচুকলা বিভাগ

বাংলাদেশ শিল্পকলা একাডেমি

'24th Young Artist Art Exhibition 2025'

Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy brings together the country's most promising emerging artists in a vibrant showcase of new ideas, bold experimentation, and contemporary visual language. This annual exhibition offers a window into the future of Bangladeshi art, celebrating fresh talent shaped by the country's shifting cultural landscape.

Date: Today | December 11, 2025
Time: 4pm onwards
Venue: National Art Gallery Auditorium, BSA

NEWS

Suspect domestic worker held

FROM PAGE 12

As her daughter Nafisa Nawal Binte Aziz attempted to save her mother, Ayesha also stabbed her.

Ayesha said these during primary interrogation after Mohammadpur police arrested her from her grandfather-in-law's house in Nalchity upazila of Jhalakathi yesterday morning, said officials involved in the investigation of the sensational double murder case.

"However, we are not fully convinced by her statement. She will be interrogated thoroughly to determine whether there was any other motive behind the gruesome murders and whether anyone else was involved," said an official, preferring anonymity.

Apart from Ayesha, Mohammadpur police also took her husband Rabbi in custody to interrogate him, said Jewel Rana, additional deputy commissioner of Mohammadpur Zone.

Laila, 48, and Nafisa, 15, wife and daughter of an English-medium schoolteacher AZM Azizul Islam, respectively, were murdered inside their home on Shahjahan Road on Tuesday morning when Azizul was at

work in Uttara.

Azizul filed a case making Ayesha the sole accused.

She allegedly made away with a mobile phone, a laptop, gold ornaments and cash after the killings. The gold ornaments include a chain and earrings of slain Laila, whom the suspected killer stabbed at least 30 times. Nafisa suffered at least six stab wounds.

A relative of the victims said they suspected that Ayesha took the chain and earrings from Laila's body after the killings as she wore those most of the time.

The footage of the building shows Ayesha entering the flat around 7:51am wearing a burqa and leaving at about 9:36am dressed in a school uniform of Nafisa, with a bag slung over her shoulder.

Talking to The Daily Star, a police official said the woman lived with her husband and their one-and-a-half-year-old son in Hemayetpur and used to commute to Dhaka daily to work as a house help.

He said her claim to the employers — that she lived with her uncle and aunt in the Mohammadpur Geneva Camp —

was completely false.

After the killings, she went straight to her home in Hemayetpur and stayed there for the whole day, fearing arrest.

As darkness fell on Tuesday, she, along with her husband, came out of the house and went to Sadarghat, where they boarded a launch to reach Jhalakathi in the morning.

Mohammadpur police arrested her hours later. Tejgaon Division Police will hold a press briefing today to divulge details about the killings, motive and other details.

Talking to The Daily Star, Azizul yesterday said his wife talked to the house help before employing her after the security guard sent her to the flat. The woman told her that she had marks of burn injuries, for which she was not getting jobs.

"We sought the NID and phone number, but she said she had neither. As she said she lived with her uncle and aunt in Geneva camp, we sought their phone numbers. But she did not provide us with those either," he said.

The family demanded exemplary punishment of those involved in the murders.

Gazette out on the police commission

FROM PAGE 12

The selection committee will include a Supreme Court judge nominated by the chief justice; the chairperson of the National Human Rights Commission; the cabinet and home secretaries; one government and one opposition lawmaker from the parliamentary standing committee on the home ministry; and the chairman of the Public Service Commission.

The home ministry will provide administrative support, and the committee is expected to complete the selection within 30 days of its initiation.

The gazette states that the commission will regularly monitor police operations and recommend improvements to discipline, accountability, and performance, while ensuring that police actions

adhere to national and international human rights standards.

A core responsibility will be to scrutinise arrests, interrogations, and the use of force. The commission will guide training and technological upgrades to protect human rights, and recommend action against misconduct or undue influence on policing.

It will also handle public complaints against police. A Citizen Complaint Management Committee will be created to ensure complaints are addressed swiftly and securely, with strong privacy protections for complainants.

Beyond accountability, the commission will focus on police welfare, proposing improvements to working conditions, housing, healthcare, and career development. It will advise on modernising training

to ensure officers are equipped for the demands of contemporary policing.

The body will also support the drafting of new policies and reforms to strengthen the force and improve public safety, offering guidance on laws and regulations governing police activities. It will assist in enacting a comprehensive, modern police law aligned with global best practices.

Reacting to the gazette, a senior police officer involved in the process told The Daily Star on condition of anonymity, "Basically, the power to formulate regulations rests with the commission, while the power to draft rules lies with the government."

"However, in this case, the government has both the powers, which could be an obstacle to the normal functioning of the commission," the officer added.

Natural disasters

FROM PAGE 12

toward improving the implementation of the National Strategy on Internal Displacement Management, which calls for systematic data collection on displaced populations.

The event featured a presentation on methodology, the official unveiling of the report and a panel discussion on how to integrate IDP estimation into government data systems.

The new estimate will help guide policies on disaster preparedness, relocation planning, social protection, climate adaptation and long-term development, Bonneau said.

"This is a critical step to ensure that the government and partners can better plan and respond to the needs of displaced communities."

BNP will ensure rights, reconcile

FROM PAGE 12

Speaking virtually at a session on the fourth day of BNP's "Plan to Build the Country" programme yesterday, Tarique said if the "paddy sheaf" wins the upcoming election, the "country will be saved".

"We must ensure the victory of the paddy sheaf... There is no alternative. With that victory, we must implement the people's plan and the plan for the people. "Your [our] party has presented a

straight-cut plan. Show me any other political party in Bangladesh that has given such a plan."

He added, "...Now is not the time to sit back. You must join the battle... What battle? For the people, for the country, for the people's rights."

The BNP leader also stressed that in tomorrow's Bangladesh, people from all walks of life, regardless of their political affiliations, should be able to express their views freely, and that human

rights violations must come to an end.

"I have the right to present my political views to the people... And when another party or individual presents their beliefs, they should be able to do so safely. As a citizen and political worker, it is my responsibility to ensure that."

He said that every BNP leader and worker who has faced hardship and torture wants to ensure that such incidents do not happen again to anyone, whether involved in politics or not.

to visit polling centres, consult political parties, local residents and colleagues, and complete preparations accordingly.

He also stressed the importance of voter awareness regarding the referendum, saying voters should decide in advance whether they would vote "yes" or "no".

Chief Adviser's Principal Secretary M Siraj Uddin Miah, Cabinet Secretary Dr Sheikh Abdur Rashid, Press Secretary Shafiqul Alam, and Secretary of the Public Administration Ministry Md Eshanul Haque, among other senior officials, were present at the meeting.

Rescue ongoing since 2yr-old fell into shaft

FROM PAGE 12

suddenly sank into the ground around noon. Curious to see the situation, the child's mother Runa Khatun went to the field with her son.

As they walked, Sazid cried "Ma!" before slipping into the shaft. Seconds later, faint cries of "Ma, ma" were heard from underground. Runa said they did not notice the shaft's

opening as it had been covered with straw.

Tanore Police Station Officer-in-Charge Shahinuzzaman said firefighters rushed to the spot upon receiving the information and began digging with the help of locals.

According to locals, groundwater levels in Koel Hat had fallen significantly. A shaft dug earlier to measure the water level had been

filled, but monsoon rains caused the soil to settle, reopening the hole.

Hundreds of people from nearby areas gathered at the scene, anxiously watching the rescue attempt and offering prayers for the child's survival. Police cordoned off the area with ropes to control the crowd, OC Shahinuzzaman said.

Rescue efforts were ongoing at the time of filing this report at 11:45pm.

performed their duties on the ground.

Calling both the election and the referendum crucial for the nation, the chief adviser said the election would shape the country for the next five years, while the referendum could influence its future for decades.

"Through the referendum, we can permanently change Bangladesh and lay the foundation for the country we want to build," he said.

Addressing the newly-appointed UNOs, he said their primary responsibility was to ensure a peaceful, festive, and participatory election. He advised them

Clinical trial of Nipah virus vaccine launched

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The University of Oxford has launched the world's first Phase II clinical trial of a Nipah virus vaccine.

The trial is being conducted in Bangladesh in partnership with icddr,b and is funded by the Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovations. An icddr,b press release yesterday said the trial began earlier this month and will enrol 306 healthy participants aged 18 to 55.

The vaccine was developed by scientists at the University of Oxford's Pandemic Sciences Institute. The first-in-human trials of the ChAdOx1 NipahB vaccine began in January 2024 in Oxford, led by the Oxford Vaccine Group.

ACC files case

FROM PAGE 3
allegedly conspired to violate banking regulations by approving large loans based on insufficient collateral and falsified financial statements.

It claims that Tk 600 crore was embezzled through loans issued under Bashundhara Import Export Limited, cash withdrawals, and other financial transactions.

High enrolment, low learning gains

FROM PAGE 3
CEO Sayeed Ahmed said only 23 percent of children have any books at home, and just 7 percent have access to a computer or tablet.

"Most complete primary school without functional skills," he said, adding, "Almost all 10-year-olds are in school, yet well under 50 percent reach minimum proficiency in reading or maths."

This learning gap fuels youth frustration and contributes to a mismatch between skills and job opportunities, he also said.

Brac University Emeritus Professor Manzoor Ahmed called for more research on school-based education to guide effective policies.

He stressed the need for better-trained teachers, especially in primary schools, and urged political parties to prioritise education in their election manifestos.

He said repeated requests for an Education Rights Act and separate education commissions have been denied, even under the interim government.

National Citizen Party Joint Member Secretary Musfiq Us Salehin said the country continues to emphasise infrastructure development, while improving teacher training is equally important.

Media personality Kazi Tasin said it is the responsibility of the government and stakeholders to ensure

strong teacher training, professional conferences, and quality education at the school level.

He suggested allocating adequate budgets, offering regular training at primary and secondary levels, and organising district- or division-level conferences to improve teacher competencies.

National Academy for Primary Education Director Dilruba Ahmed acknowledged ongoing challenges, including dependence on coaching centres and weak classroom instruction.

She stressed the need for practical solutions, saying Bangladesh is shifting its primary education agenda from infrastructure development to improving classroom quality.

We still lack

FROM PAGE 3

She highlighted that Bangladesh has kept reservations on key articles of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) charter, which are essential for eliminating discrimination.

Liberation War Museum Trustee Sarwar Ali said Bangladesh cannot honestly claim progress in human rights unless the 1971 genocide and its aftermath are confronted and acknowledged.

"To consider today's rights situation, we must consider the situation of 1971. It is impossible to improve the overall situation without eliminating the 'culture of fear' from society," Sarwar Ali said.

He reflected on the mindset of the Pakistani occupation forces, saying that the root of the genocide lay in their view of East Pakistanis as "inferior" or "low-caste" people.

Genocide begins when a specific group in society is marked for elimination in the name of "purifying" society. That mentality, that no one can be spared, leads to mass killings, he said.

"We hope to free society from these deep-seated prejudices by taking the lessons of 1971 into account," Sarwar Ali added.

The programme began with a musical performance by Promila Biswas.

Issue notice for Joy to appear

FROM PAGE 3

fixed for charge framing hearings in another crimes against humanity case against Salman F Rahman, former adviser to the ousted prime minister Sheikh Hasina, and former law minister Anisul Huq. Both are in custody and were produced before the tribunal.

Meanwhile, defence counsel Md Munsurul Hoque Chowdhury filed a petition seeking permission to appoint foreign lawyers for Salman and Anisul, arguing that tribunal approval was needed before approaching the Bangladesh Bar Council.

Chief Prosecutor Tajul Islam opposed the plea,

calling it "misconceived" and saying the accused must first seek Bar Council permission. He accused the defence of trying to delay the trial. The tribunal said it would pass an order later.

PALAK'S JAIL RIGHTS CURTAILED

Meanwhile, Palak's lawyer, M Liton Ahmed, told the tribunal that jail authorities had curtailed some of his client's rights after he chanted "Joy Bangla" and sang the national anthem.

He requested an order to restore facilities such as weekly phone calls to family members and fortnightly meetings with relatives and lawyers. He added that Palak, who faces 88 cases, had been

denied access to his lawyers since November 28.

Opposing the request, Tajul said the plea was not maintainable since most of the cases were outside the tribunal's jurisdiction. He said Palak would receive facilities under jail code and must apply to jail authorities in writing.

Justice Mortuza observed that "something must have happened" for the rights to be curtailed and asked whether jail authorities had given any written explanation. The defence said they had not.

The tribunal said if Palak committed any misconduct, jail authorities could take action within the law.

UN proposals saw 'mixed response'

FROM PAGE 3

on disbanding Rab, but that didn't happen," though there were "welcome changes in the criminal code," including the enactment of a law on enforced disappearances, which she said came faster than expected.

She said the report received "very positive responses from the government, from civil society, from victims, and everyone else," except from those opposed to accountability.

"These atrocities were not carried out by individuals but by institutions, and many of those institutions remain

in the same shape and form," she said, adding that no "major fundamental change" has taken place.

Journalist David Bergman highlighted the significance of the UN fact-finding report, noting it came amid widespread disinformation from Indian sources. While some journalists knew the facts, the report provided the first clear, well-documented, and systematic account of the events.

Family members of slain Mohammad Ridoy and Tahir Zaman Priyo, along with student leader Umama Fatema also spoke at the event.

MONSOON PROTEST

ARCHIVE

Organisers said work on the archive began during the uprising and remains ongoing. The records are intended to serve as digital evidence of alleged human rights violations and to support future efforts toward justice and accountability.

So far, the database contains information on 933 victims, including their names, occupations, causes and locations of death. The website also features an interactive map showing the geographical distribution of protester deaths across the country.

কোল পাওয়ার জেনারেশন কোম্পানি বাংলাদেশ লিমিটেড (সিপিজিসিবিএল)
Coal Power Generation Company Bangladesh Limited (CPGCBL)
(An Enterprise of Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh)

Invitation for e-Tender

IFT Memo No: 27.32.0000.000.008.07.0006.25.1131; Date: 10/12/2025

e-Tender is invited in the National e-GP System Portal (www.eprocure.gov.bd) for the procurement of following work:

e-Tender ID	Name of Works	Tender Document last selling/ downloading Date & Time	Tender Closing and Opening Date & Time
1192217	Testing of Different types of Lube Oil used at Steam Turbine of Matarbari Coal Fired Power Plant	28-Dec-2025 11:30	29-Dec-2025 11:30

This is an online Tender, where only e-Tender will be accepted in e-GP Portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted. To submit e-GP Tender, please register on e-GP System (www.eprocure.gov.bd). For more details, please contract with e-GP support desk (HL-16575).

(S. M. Abdul Mannaf)
Superintending Engineer (Procurement) (Additional Charge)
CPGCBL, Dhaka. Phone: 01787-678669

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Office of the Chief Controller of Stores
Bangladesh Railway
Pahartali, Chittagong-4202
Telephone: 031-659604 E-mail: ccspt@railway.gov.bd

No. CCS/eGP Notice/2025 Date: 10/12/2025

e-Tender Notice
Notice No. 2025/39 (Corrigendum-1)

e-Tender is invited in the National e-GP System Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) by Chief Controller of Stores, Bangladesh Railway, Pahartali, Chattogram for the Procurement of Goods as stated below:

Field Name	Old Value	New Value
No. 54.01.1543.636.8.317.25	Completion Date (Lot No. 1)	25/03/2026 30/04/2026
Tender Id. 1173292	Last selling date & time	17/12/2025 10:00 31/12/2025 10:00
Repair of different types of Traction Motor required for 2300, 2400, 6000 & 6100 Series Locomotives (Meter Gauge)	Eligibility of Consultant	As per TDS As per TDS
	Opening Date & Time	17/12/2025 13:00 31/12/2025 12:30
	Meeting End Date & Time	15/12/2025 10:00 24/12/2025 11:30
	Last date & time for Tender/Proposal Security Submission	17/12/2025 11:00 31/12/2025 11:00
	Start Date (Lot No. 1)	18/12/2025 01/01/2026 12:30
	Closing Date & Time	17/12/2025 13:00 31/12/2025 13:00
	Brief Description of Goods, Works, of Service	Repair of different types of Traction Motor required for 2300, 2400, 6000 & 6100 Series Locomotives (Meter Gauge) = 34 Nos.

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

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

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

এস (২৫) (১১৭)

Md. Shariful Islam
Assistant Controller of Stores/P2
On the behalf of CCS/PHT

FROM PAGE 3
country is still struggling to overcome the legacy of years of authoritarian rule.

"The state must ensure that law enforcement or intelligence agencies do not pick up people, torture them or kill them. There must not be a situation where people disappear without a trace," he added.

UN Human Rights Office Senior Adviser Huma Khan stressed the need for cultural and institutional change to improve human rights.

She welcomed steps toward legal reforms -- including moves for an independent judiciary and a new police commission -- but said laws alone are not enough. "We need a cultural shift in education,

social interactions, and family structures," she added.

Mutual respect and accountability are essential for a rights-based society, she added.

Attorney General Md Assaduzzaman said the human rights situation has significantly improved since the July uprising.

"There has been no reported enforced disappearance, extrajudicial killing, or politically motivated case by law enforcement since July," he said.

He added that protecting human rights is the government's top priority.

UN Human Rights Officer Md Zahid Hossain also spoke.

Apprehension over

FROM PAGE 3

understanding, where parties realise they "cannot get away with major injustice or misrule".

The Citizen's Platform will announce its "Reform Watch" on December 14 and present a "Citizen Manifesto," prioritising grassroots opinions, to political parties on December 20, he said.

During the open discussion, Ali Akbar, director of the Bangladesh Shipping Agents Association, argued against bringing in foreign operators for two of the Chattogram port terminals but insisted that terminals requiring foreign expertise be leased through a competitive international

tender.

Responding to the port issue, Debapriya said, "Good work should not be done in a hurry. We were all surprised by why this was done in a rush."

He acknowledged the need for modern equipment but stressed that the process matters as much as the outcome.

Professor Mostafizur Rahman, a Citizen's Platform fellow, questioned the political leadership: "Has the 'fear of God' not entered the hearts of politicians after such a big movement only a year and a half ago? Have they not developed the fear that worse consequences will follow if they behave similarly in the future?"

সিলেট সিটি কর্পোরেশন
নগর ভবন, সিলেট
www.scc.gov.bd

স্মারক নং-৪৬.০৮.০০০০.০২৮.৯৯.০২৫.১৯.২৩৮১ তারিখঃ ১০/১২/২০২৫খ্রিঃ

দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি ১২/২০২৫-২৬

এতদ্বারা সংশ্লিষ্ট কাজের অভিজ্ঞতাসম্পন্ন ঠিকাদার/সরবরাহকারীদের অবগতির জন্য জানানো যাচ্ছে যে, ২০২৫-২৬ অর্থবছরের কর্পোরেশনের প্রকৌশল শাখায় e-GP এর OTM ও LTM পদ্ধতিতে দরপত্র আহ্বান করা হয়েচ্ছে যার তেজার অধিভি নিয়ে দেয়া হল। কাজের নাম, দরপত্র খোলার তারিখসহ অন্যান্য শর্তাবলী সম্বলিত বিস্তারিত দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি এসিসিসি ও ওয়েবসাইট www.scc.gov.bd ও e-GP এর ওয়েবসাইট www.eprocure.gov.bd এ দেখা যাবে।

e-GP Tender ID No.
1193166, 1193310, 1193377,
1193748, 1193770, 1193400,
1193964, 1193987, 1193480,
1194139, 1194414, 1194427.

প্রধান প্রকৌশলী
সিলেট সিটি কর্পোরেশন

Office of the Sub Project Manager
"Advancing Climate-Smart of Bangladesh" Sub-Project
Department of Marine Bioresource Science
Chattogram Veterinary and Animal Sciences University, Khulshi, Chattogram

Memo No. CVASU/DMBS/HEAT/05/2025/14 Date: 09 /12/2025

e-Tender Notice

e-Tender is invited in the National e-GP system portal: (www.eprocure.gov.bd) for the procurement of:

Tender ID No.	Package No.	Description of Goods/Works	Last Selling Date and Time	Closing Date and Time	Opening Date and Time
1187315	CVASU/PIN13362/G-1	Procurement of ICT Equipment for the Dept. of Marine Bioresources Science and Project Activity.	23-Dec-2025 12:00 PM	23-Dec-2025 02:00PM	11-Dec-2025 12:00PM

This is an online Tender, Where, only e-Tender will be accepted in the National e-GP portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted.

SD/-
Sub Project Manager
13362, CVASU

GOVERNMENT OF THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF BANGLADESH
Power Division
Bangladesh Secretariat, Dhaka.
Admin-3 Section
www.powerdivision.gov.bd

No. 27.00.0000.043.07.042.25-580 Date: 10.12.2025

e-Tender Notice

e-Tender is invited through the National e-GP Portal (www.eprocure.gov.bd) for the procurement of:

SL No.	Tender ID	Description	Tender Publish Date	Tender Closing Date
1.	1179353, GR-04	Procurement of Official Stationery Items	09.12.2025	22.12.2025

This is an online Tender, where only e-Tende will be accepted through National e-GP Portal. No hard Copy will be accepted. The fees for downloading the e-Tender documents from the National e-GP Portal have to be deposited through any registered branch of enlisted banks. Further information and guidelines are available on the National e-GP System Portal and e-GP help desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd).

(Md. Nazmul Hamid Reza)
Senior Assistant Secretary
Power Division
Ph: 02223390024
E-mail: admin-3@pd.gov.bd

Kaligong Pourashava, Jhenaidah

Memo No. Kali/Poura/LGCRRP/8-64/2023/557 Date: 10/12/2025

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

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

SL No.	Package No.	Name of scheme	e-Tender ID No.	Last date & time of selling documents	Opening & closing date and time
1	LGCRRP/Kaligong/2025-26/W-08	1) Upgrade of Bolidapara road from H/o. Mr. Mohammad Ali to Raigram Road via H/o. Mr. Akter Ch 0+00-1+085.00-1085.00m under Kaligong Pourashava. FY-2025-2026. 2) Construction of RCC drain by the side of Bolidapara Road from H/o. Mr. Malek Driver to Ricer Chitra Ch 0+00-04+450.00m=450.00m under Kaligong Pourashava. 3) Construction of RCC drain by the side of Hospital Road near Bolidapara Kabarstan Mosque at (Ch 600-765)=165.00m under Kaligong Pourashava	1188624	Date: 28.12.2025 Time: 17:00pm	Date: 29.12.2025 Time: 12:00am

Tenderer must submit updated trade license, Vat, IT, updated LGED enlistment documents and bank solvency certificate etc. as described in TDS. Without updated enlistment documents Tender will be nonresponsive. This is an online tender, where only e-Tender will be accepted in the National e-GP Portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted. To submit e-Tender, registration in the National e-GP System Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) is required.

The fees for downloading the e-Tender documents from the National e-GP System Portal have to be deposited on the line through any registered banks branches up to 28-12-2025 at 17:00am. Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP System Portal and also from E-mail: kaligongpourashavajh@gmail.com or call +8801712120480. For any queries interested tenderer are requested to communicate with the undersigned during office hours.

Md. Kabir Hassan
Executive Engineer
Kaligong Pourashava, Jhenaidah
kaligongpourashavajh@gmail.com

THE SHELF

5 books that portray the ecological devastation of 1971

STAR BOOKS REPORT

The ecological impact of the 1971 War of Liberation is not as well documented as some of the other, spectacularised aspects of war. Without a doubt, the nine-month-long war and the resulting mass displacement altered and affected our entire ecosystem. Yet, when we think of the atrocities committed, the losses experienced, the injuries sustained, we often leave unexamined the devastation experienced by the environment—the flora and fauna, the water bodies and trees, the animals and the nonhumans.

This Victory Day, we examine texts that address the ecological ruination of the war and the ways in which our literary expressions capture this specific disruption.

Life and Political Reality
Shahidul Zahir
Samhati Prokashan, 2022

Shahidul Zahir's first novella is a tale of two days, set 15 years apart,

examining 1971 and its aftermath. The novella opens with the sound of Abdul Majid's sandal's straps going "phot", a mundane sound that is magnified by its significance as he hears the voice of Bodu Maulana's son Abul Khair address the inhabitants of his moholla or neighborhood as "brothers". Here, Zahir uses recurring imagery of animals and smaller creatures—crows, rats, termites, mice, ants—to intensify the sense of horror, fear, claustrophobia, and dehumanisation in war and its aftermath, evoking the way violence affects the entire ecosystem: not only humans, but the non-human environment becomes witness, victim, or participant in collective trauma.

"Mr Moti"
Rahad Abir
The Daily Star, 2023

A deceptively simple tale of a prized cock and his soft, yet heartbreaking relationship with his owner Sonavan, Rahad Abir's "Mr Moti" is an unforgettable piece of literature capturing the quiet devastation of 1971. As Sonavan waits for her son to return from the war, years tick by, Mr. Moti's temperament shifts, and a changing Bangladesh attempts to come to terms with its own history.

Babu Bangladesh!
Numair Atif Choudhury
Fourth Estate, 2019

The opening episodes of *Babu Bangladesh!* tell us it is about Babu



Abdul Majumder. Born in 1971, he apparently became famous from 2008 onwards only to disappear in 2021, heading, we are told, for "unknown skies" then. We find that the narrator of the story is a huge fan bent on reviving the reputation of this "spirited environmentalist." One of the novel's major sections is titled "Tree" and centers around a grand banyan tree (often called "Bot Tola") in the campus of Dhaka University. This tree becomes a symbol of resistance, national identity, and collective memory—especially in the context of the 1971 Liberation struggle, when the army destroyed it. Essentially, the destruction of that tree stands for destruction of cultural and ecological heritage—a recurring tension between militaristic/political

violence and ecological/natural heritage.

Noor
Sorayya Khan
Penguin, 2003

Set in modern day Islamabad, Khan's debut novel features a talented child artist Noor whose haunting artwork compels her family members to confront their own traumatic past, especially through the 1970 cyclone that claimed the lives of a million people. Noor's drawings—delicate, powerful, and complex—bear witness to the cyclone's horrific aftermath on one hand and forces her family to come face to face with their complicitous participation in the 1971 war of independence on the other.



Dahankal
Harishankar Jaladas
Mowla Brothers, 2015

Dahankal shows how the 1971 war destroyed the coastal world that a fishing community depends on. Their lives once followed the steady rhythm of the sea—mending nets, repairing boats, and trusting the tides to feed their families. But when the war reaches the coast, this balance collapses. Many villages near the shoreline are burned, boats and nets are destroyed, and the natural habitat the community relied on is disrupted. The violence also claimed the lives of fishermen and their sons, breaking families and cutting through a way of life shaped by the sea for generations. By depicting this devastation, the novel reveals how the war harms both the people and the fragile coastal environment that sustained them.

ESSAY

Revisiting Humayun Azad's classic, 'KOTO NODI SHOROBOR'

Azad's love letter to Bangla is, paradoxically, both timeless and a product of its time

NAJMUS SAKIB

The relationship between mutual intelligibility and linguistic classification is famously complex, often boiling down to politics rather than purely linguistic differences. In Scandinavia, Danish, Norwegian, and Swedish are treated as separate languages primarily because they belong to different countries, a separation cemented by historical events that dissolved pan-Scandinavian political unions.

Our Bangla is a great counter-example. Obviously, the varieties spoken on the two sides of the border, in Bangladesh and West Bengal, have many differences but they are, nonetheless, Bangla, and their speakers identify themselves as speakers of the Bangla language. This starkly contrasts with Hindustani, which, after the birth of India and Pakistan, was purposefully developed into two national languages: Hindi and Urdu. A similar, more recent fragmentation can be seen in the Balkans, where Serbo-Croatian was deliberately split into Serbian, Croatian, Bosnian, and Montenegrin to match new national identities. Bangla, however, for a very long time, has resisted this powerful political tide.

Certainly I didn't know all this when I was in high school but I was deeply intrigued by a little book back then. It had a fascinating title: *Koto Nodi Shorobor* (1987) and Humayun Azad's prose was enchanting to that little teenager. Fast forward to early November of this year, and as I was walking down a particularly suffocating alley of Nilkhet, a dusty old version of this book caught my eyes. I bought it for just 50 taka without much thought. Back in my room, when I read it, I was enamored, more so than the little teenager. I study linguistics now, and so I am quite familiar with what Azad has written and even now this seemed a particularly enthralling read. I couldn't put it down.

This renewed enchantment, I realise, stemmed from finally understanding the analytical power of Azad's central metaphor: the 'jiboni' or life story of Bangla (the subtitle of the book is *Bangla Bhashar Jiboni*). In my early teens, I took it literally and didn't give it

much thought but now I can see that this framing was his core argument. By giving Bangla a biography, Azad emphasises its continuous, unbroken lineage and its ability to adapt, borrow, and grow just like any living organism.

And while there's a powerful romance in the idea that a life story cannot be severed by a border, this is not a permanent condition. The protagonist of W H Auden's "Partition" (1966) may have failed to cleave our language in name, but he set in motion an inexorable bifurcation. The geographical chasm will continue to widen the linguistic one, until, perhaps a few hundred years from now, politics or time will do the trick, turning one language into two.

Azad's brilliance lies in anchoring us to the shared history of the language that has so far defied it. He traces Bangla's origins to the spoken Magadhi Prakrit, framing our language's birth as a vernacular defiance against a rigid literary establishment. From this point of origin, Azad takes us on a thousand-year journey, presenting its evolution as a dynamic story of encounters. The arrival of Perso-Arabic influence, for instance, is depicted as a vital enrichment that gave the language new textures, sounds, and a worldly flexibility. This continuous life is given a spine, a verifiable timeline, through its literary milestones, which he presents as proof of consciousness: the cryptic verses of the *Charyapadas* emerge from the mist of time, followed by the devotional ecstasy of Vaishnava poets and the grand narratives of the Mangalkavyas, culminating in the standardisation in the works of Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar, Rabindranath Tagore and others. Azad here does more than merely listing these events, he weaves them into the biography of a single, continuous entity.

The book's enduring magic comes from its prose, a hypnotic instrument Azad uses to speak to us about our own language. The genius of *Koto Nodi Shorobor* lies in its brilliant use of metaphors and comparisons. The first chapter of the book illustrates this perfectly. He compares our innate thirst for the mother tongue to the mythical

chatok bird, which thirsts only for the first drops of pure rainwater and will not drink from any other source. This image transforms language from a social contract into a primal, existential need. He deploys this technique throughout the book. Whenever needed, he does state the phonological changes that occurred but he also personifies the sounds themselves, and by anthropomorphising these abstract processes, translating concepts like vowel harmony or lenition into tales of transformation, Azad makes the history of a word as dramatic and

enriches the ecosystem. He shows, for instance, that some of our most intimate and essential words, words that purists might disdain as foreign, are now part of Bangla's soul. By doing so, he constructs a rationalist history of a people reflected in their tongue: one of trade, conquest, love, and intellectual exchange. Any attempt to purify this language is an act of historical violence, a denial of this rich past. To freeze the language in a pure state, a vain attempt anyway, is to kill it, to stop the flowing river and turn it into a static block of ice. *Koto Nodi Shorobor*, ultimately, stands as Azad's precious

Persian and English into Bangla.

This tendency to smooth over complex histories extends to his claims about universal constructions. In his admirable effort to make language feel structured and familiar, Azad occasionally makes sweeping declarations that are questionable and wrong. For instance, he states definitively that "in all languages of the world, there are these three persons of pronouns" (ami, tumi, shey). A few pages later, he makes a similarly bold claim: that "in all languages of the world, there is a difference in the form of nouns and pronouns for singular and plural."

rich diversity that makes its study so endlessly fascinating.

Furthermore, when Azad recounts how even Sri Chaitanya was mocking Sylheti, he does so with a historical detachment that feels unsettling. Reading this now, I can't help but feel a pang of disappointment. The issue is that Azad presents this historical mockery as a neutral, almost charming anecdote. For his young audience, this serves to normalise a deeply ingrained social prejudice. Here, I wished Azad the linguist had intervened. He was perfectly capable of explaining that this form of joking is not harmless fun, but a classic expression of a power dynamic, where the speech of the center mocks the speech of the periphery to reinforce its own prestige.

Later in the book, in describing the victory of the Language Movement, Azad's praise culminates in the assertion that Bangladesh is a unique country named after its language, "The language is Bangla, the country is Bangla." This is, frankly, not far from the monolithic views that he lambasted in his more politico-religious books. The minority languages of the country are at a great peril now. For the speakers of these languages, many of which face the very real threat of endangerment, the declaration of a proudly monolingual state would not come as comforting, nor is it very characteristic of the Azad the rationalist who championed a pluralistic society and here he was momentarily eclipsed by the nationalist celebrating a singular identity.

Obviously, these shortcomings don't take much away from the writer's magnificent love letter to the beautiful language that is Bangla. It is the text that awakened in me a profound thirst: a need to understand the origins of the words we speak and the history that lives in our mouths. The critiques I have now are a direct result of the curiosity it first instilled. Azad's book did not give me all the answers, but it taught me, indelibly, how to love the question.

Najmus Sakib studies Linguistics at the University of Dhaka. Reach him at kazis713@gmail.com.

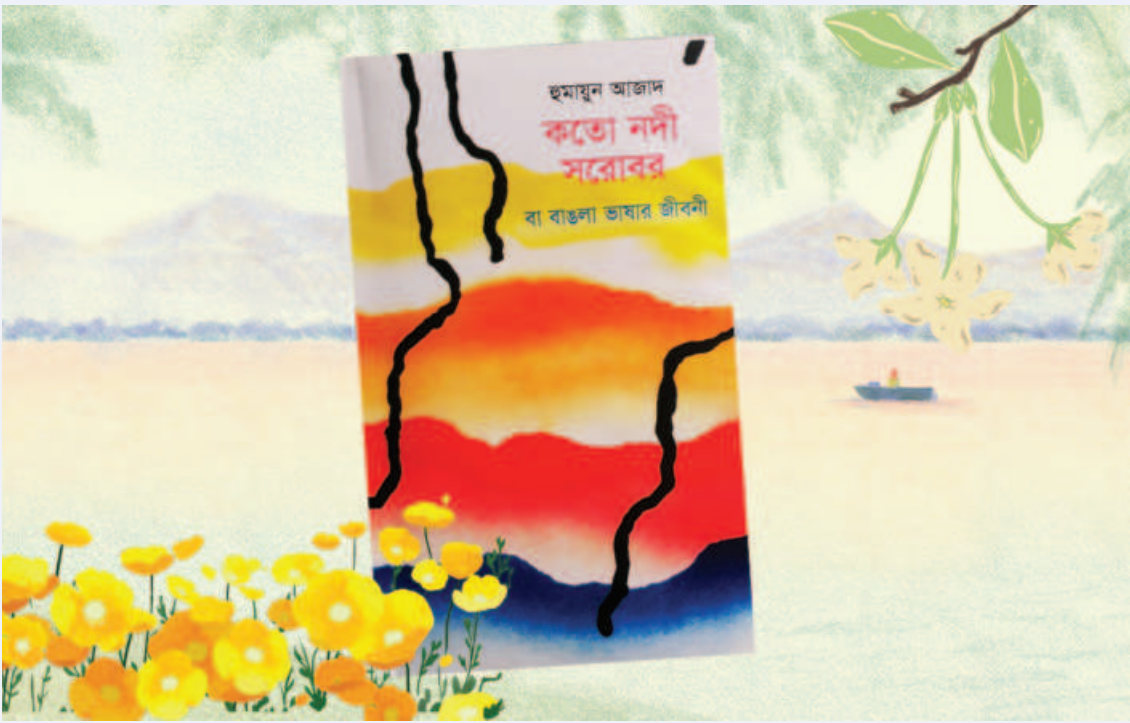


ILLUSTRATION: MAISHA SYEDA

magnificent as the life of a character in a novel.

This narrative method serves as a vehicle for Azad's arguments. His biography of the language is a celebration of hybridity. In a region where linguistic identity is often weaponised through appeals to purity, Azad's history is a powerful polemic against such rigid thinking. In his telling, the arrival of a Persian or Portuguese word is as natural and vital as a river absorbing a new tributary and each addition strengthens the current and

paean to our language.

All of this is not to say that the little book is free of vices. Its intended audience of children and laypeople makes a degree of simplification necessary, but this approach has its drawbacks. Problems arise when Azad's sweeping statements obscure crucial sociolinguistic and historical realities. For example, his assertion that languages "borrow when needed, to stay lively" is a glaring oversimplification. It erases the power dynamics of conquest and colonialism that drove the entry of

Languages of the world have such a breathtaking diversity that they defy such easy categorisation. Many languages across East Asia, like Chinese and Vietnamese, manage perfectly without mandatory plural markers on nouns. Others have pronoun systems far more complex than our own, including the crucial distinction between an "inclusive we" (you and me) and an "exclusive we" (me and others, but not you). By presenting the structure of our language as the default, Azad's book, however inadvertently, flattens this



An injury during the NCL T20 nearly ended **Mukidul Islam Mugdho's** entire domestic season. But the pacer not only fought his way back to the field, but also played a pivotal role in Rangpur Division's title win in the red-ball NCL, finishing as the second-highest wicket-taker with 29 scalps in just four matches and was adjudged the player-of the tournament. In a conversation with **The Daily Star's Samsul Arefin Khan**, the 25-year-old spoke about the team's remarkable turnaround, his recovery journey and the challenges that lie ahead. Excerpts are as follows:

The Daily Star (DS): It was a great NCL for you and Rangpur Division. Your team staged a tremendous comeback in the last match against Khulna Division after conceding a 134-run first innings lead. How did such a turnaround happen?

Mukidul Islam Mugdho (MIM): Unfortunately, we dropped six catches in the first innings and there were a few wrong umpiring decisions, which allowed them to post a decent total.

Then we suffered a collapse in our first innings. When I went in, [captain] Akbar [Ali] bhai told me, "Play as long as you can. If we avoid the follow-on, the game can still change." Babu [Alauddin] bhai was batting with me and together we avoided the follow-on.

After the innings, the whole team sat together and decided that we had nothing to lose. Everyone bowled with discipline and we managed to dismiss Khulna for just 96. The batters then did their job brilliantly in the chase.

DS: You missed most of the NCL T20 due to injury. How tough was the recovery process?

MIM: During the first NCL T20 match, while trying to save a boundary, I suffered a Grade II hamstring tear. The BCB doctors said it would take at least a month to recover. I completed the rehab, but the recovery wasn't perfect.

I was eager to return, but the medical department didn't allow me initially due to the risk of recurrence. That's why I missed the first two matches of the longer version. Even after that, they were hesitant. I told them I felt ready and eventually got clearance. Even now, I'm not fully fit. There's still a bit of pain.

DS: Why did you risk returning before fully recovering?

MIM: The BCB physios had warned me that returning before fully recovering carried risks. But the reality here is that if you don't play, people forget you. I missed the NCL T20, the BPL was coming up, and I felt that if I didn't perform in the NCL, I might not even get a team. So, I told myself I had to be mentally strong. Whatever happens, I would keep working and try to perform.

DS: At one point, you were seemingly knocking at the doors of the national team, but now you seem far away. What happened?

MIM: Honestly, I don't know. My job is to perform and I try to do that whenever I get the chance. Selection is not in my hands.

DS: You are not part of any BCB programme at the moment, how challenging is it?

MIM: I haven't been in any camp for the last two years. Being in a camp helps a lot. Coaches, physios and trainers monitor you closely, and structured training is crucial for fitness. When you're outside the camp, you have to manage everything on your own. It's difficult, but players still try their best.

DS: There is a two-week break between the NCL and BPL. How important is this period for your recovery?

MIM: Alhamdulillah, it's very important. I'll go back to the BCB and get my hamstring checked again. The physios will assess my condition and I'll follow the programme they give me over the next 10 days.

DS: You will play for Chattogram Royals in the BPL. What is your target?

MIM: My main goal is to stay fit. If I can stay fit, I believe I can perform anywhere. The BPL is very competitive and opportunities are never guaranteed. If Allah has written it in my destiny, I will try my best to make it count.

Can BHF build on WORLD CUP SPARK?

ANISUR RAHMAN

Bangladesh U-21's spirited showing at the Junior World Cup has revived an old discussion about whether Bangladesh Hockey Federation can turn isolated success into sustainable progress.

The Challenger Trophy, courtesy of a 17th-place finish, may not sound glamorous, but for a sport long starved of structure and investment, it was a reminder of what is possible when talent meets even a little organisation.

The junior side, limited in resources yet rich in belief, proved on the world stage that they can compete if given the right environment. Their finish ahead of Austria, Korea, China, Egypt and Canada – along with brave contests against Australia and France – signalled that the gap is not insurmountable.

Players like Amirul Islam, Rakibul Hasan, Din Islam, Mahmud Hassan, Obaidul Joy, Hozifa Hossain and Mehrab Hossain embodied that unity and appetite.

This spark of hope contrasts sharply with the sport's broader decline. The last wave of nationwide excitement came in 1985, when hosting the Men's Asia Cup inspired children to play with bent bamboo and paper balls.

Four decades later, the landscape



looks stark: no regular premier league, no district competitions, and a shrinking talent pipeline that forces dependence on BKSP.

For BHF general secretary Lt Col (Rtd) Riazul Hasan, the crux is simple – money. He said financial constraints remain the sport's biggest barrier, though the

federation hopes to approach sponsors and seek government assistance to build on the World Cup momentum. He suggested that even "small contributions" from sponsors could help sustain programmes.

Dutch coach Siegfried Aikman, whose four-month tenure introduced

discipline, compact defending and quick transitions, is unlikely to stay due to budget shortfalls. Riazul acknowledged that retaining a foreign coach long-term is unrealistic without secured funding, though the federation plans to appeal to the government and, if successful, rehire Aikman or bring in another top-level FIH coach.

He also admitted it will be difficult to keep the squad together in the coming months. The federation is considering setting fitness benchmarks, ensuring players maintain standards before joining camp.

There are also plans to send the team abroad for invitational tournaments, depending on available funds.

On the domestic front, Riazul echoed players' calls for competitive leagues, though clubs have remained reluctant. He said the BHF will again urge them to restart the premier league. The recent support from Brac Bank for women's hockey offers a hint of what thoughtful corporate involvement can achieve, and Riazul hopes similar backing will emerge for the men's game.

This Junior World Cup run hinted at what Bangladesh hockey could be. The real test is whether BHF can convert momentum into a movement before the opportunity fades.



LIVERPOOL SHINE SANS SALAH, KOUNDE BARCA'S UNLIKELY HERO

Liverpool shrugged off the absence of Mohamed Salah -- dropped for the trip to San Siro after publicly criticising club and manager Arne Slot -- as midfielder Dominik Szoboszlai converted an 88th-minute penalty to seal a 1-0 win at Inter Milan and boost their hopes of a top-eight finish. Meanwhile, the return of the Champions League to the Camp Nou for the first time since 2022 could have turned sour for Barcelona when Eintracht Frankfurt forward Ansgar Knauff put the visitors ahead in the 21st minute on Tuesday. However, unlikely goalscoring hero Jules Kounde struck twice with headers early in the second half to help Barca bounce back to a 2-1 victory, allowing Hansi Flick's side to find their stride after a draw against Club Brugge and a loss to Chelsea.

PHOTO: AFP/REUTERS

Rare gifts that keep on giving

AGENCIES

At an age when most cricketers either step away from the game or begin planning for life beyond it, India's evergreen greats Rohit Sharma and Virat Kohli are still rewriting what longevity can look like at the elite level. And now, they appear poised for a fascinating duel for the No.1 spot in the ICC ODI batting rankings.

Kohli has surged again in the latest ICC Men's ODI Player Rankings released on Wednesday, strengthening his push to reclaim the top position he last held in April 2021 before being overtaken by Pakistan's Babar Azam. His recent form in the three-match ODI series against South Africa underlined a remarkable late-career renaissance. The 37-year-old piled up 302 runs across the series, earning the player of the series award, and climbed two places to No.2 – just behind longtime teammate Rohit Sharma.

Rohit, 38, retained his place at the summit after scoring 146 runs in the same series, with Kohli now a mere eight rating points behind following his unbeaten 65 in the Visakhapatnam finale. Their duel is set to continue when India host New Zealand for a three-match ODI series from 11 January, a contest that will put renewed focus on two veterans still producing masterclass innings while defying sporting age norms.

Despite constant speculation about their

futures, both Rohit and Kohli continue to silence doubts with weight of runs. Free from the relentless demands of Test cricket and the intensity of T20Is, the pair have channelled their experience and energy into ODIs – and the results have been emphatic.



Kohli's last four ODI innings – 74*, 135, 102 and 65* – reflect a sustained stretch of dominance. Rohit, leaner and purposeful at the crease, has notched four fifty-plus scores in his last five appearances, reaffirming his control at the top.

Whether the duo will still be around for the 2027 World Cup is uncertain. But for now, their longevity, hunger and sheer class continue to light up India's ODI cricket. For millions of fans, Rohit and Kohli remain the rare gifts that keep on giving.

First Division League deferred again

SPORTS REPORTER

The Cricket Committee of Dhaka Metropolis (CCDM) announced yet another deferment of the First Division League, which will now begin on December 14, the CCDM stated at a press conference at the Sher-e-Bangla National Cricket Stadium in Mirpur yesterday.

The start of the league has been pushed back multiple times after 44 clubs protested alleged irregularities in the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) elections and declared a boycott of all domestic competitions.

Initially scheduled to start on November 18, the First Division League was first deferred to November 25. BCB president Aminul Islam had later announced a revised start date of December 11.

The league has now been postponed to December 14 due to complications with ground preparations, CCDM chairman Adnan Rahman said at the briefing.

Although only 12 of the 20 First Division clubs took part in players' transfers, Adnan confirmed that fixtures have been prepared with all 20 teams included.

Former Bangladesh captain Tamim Iqbal – one of the club councillors who boycotted the BCB elections – has instructed his club, Old DOHS, to participate in the league. The BCB "saluted" Tamim in a statement on Wednesday and welcomed the decision.



PHOTO: BFF

BFF, BSRM join hands for football development

The Bangladesh Football Federation and BSRM joined hands to strengthen the foundation of football in the country. In this regard, the two organisations penned a 10-year deal at the BFF headquarters in Motijheel on Wednesday. According to the BFF high-ups, BSRM, the No 1 steel brand of the country, will become the development partner of BFF, and will assist the federation in conducting coaches training programme and technical programme as well as development of BFF Elite Academy apart from other development activities of the federation. In the first five years, BSRM will provide a certain amount of financial support to the BFF. After evaluating the activities of this phase, the financial sum for the following five years will be determined. BFF president Tabith Awal and BSRM's managing director Aameir Alihussain signed the agreement on behalf of their respective organisations. The agreement signing ceremony was also attended by BFF's vice-president Fahad Karim, BSRM's finance director Zohair Taherali, director Abdul Qadir Zohair and Sarah Ali, managing director of FCB Bitopi.



BSRM

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DOUBLE MURDER

Suspect domestic worker held in Jhalakathi



STAFF CORRESPONDENT

House help Ayesha planned to steal valuables from the house in Mohammadpur and after working for three days, she carried a sharp knife with her, intending to use it if anyone noticed.

Upon arriving at the flat on Shahjahan Road early Monday morning, she went to the kitchen and took another knife from there and kept it with her.

When her employer Laila Afroz saw her stealing valuables, Ayesha allegedly stabbed her indiscriminately, wielding two knives in both hands.

SEE PAGE 8 COL 1



Though the iron bar was lowered to stop pedestrians and vehicles before the Tejgaon level crossing, a man with a rickshaw-van and others crossed the barrier and stood nonchalant inches away from a train at speed yesterday.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

Make the polls fair, historic

Yunus tells UNOs

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Chief Adviser Professor Muhammad Yunus yesterday described the upcoming national election as a historic opportunity to build a new Bangladesh following the mass uprising and stressed that it must be conducted in a fair and credible manner.

He made the remarks while issuing directives on election preparations to Upazila Nirbahi Officers (UNOs) across the country through a videoconference from the state guest house Jamuna.

Deputy commissioners, divisional commissioners, and officials of the Cabinet Division also joined the meeting online.

Addressing the UNOs, Yunus said history had offered the nation a rare opportunity.

SEE PAGE 8 COL 1

BNP will ensure rights, reconcile

Says Tarique

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

BNP Acting Chairman Tarique Rahman yesterday said his party, despite facing the most repression over the last 16 years, does not want revenge and is instead committed to ensuring accountability, reconciliation and democratic rights.

In a Facebook post on the occasion of Human Rights Day yesterday, he wrote that BNP envisions a future Bangladesh built on unity, dignity and democratic freedoms, with human rights upheld.

"BNP has suffered deeply, yet emerged stronger, guided by the belief that truth, justice, accountability, reconciliation and a shared commitment to the rule of law can build a Bangladesh that honours every voice and every life, a nation where human rights are defended as essential to our collective future," UNB reported quoting Tarique.

He said Bangladesh was "under a dark sky" for 16 years as fear replaced basic freedoms, adding that no political organisation bore this burden more than BNP.

"...and in the 2024 mass uprising, it was again BNP's ranks that suffered the highest number of deaths and injuries.

"Yet even from enforced silence, I kept fighting for the rights and democracy denied to millions, proving that a spirit committed to justice cannot be muted by decree."

Sharing personal accounts, Tarique said his own mother, Khaleda Zia, endured the pain of seeing her son tortured in custody, and his family suffered the loss of his brother.

Calling for a rights-based future, he urged Bangladeshis to remember the stories of Abrar Fahad, Mushtaq Ahmed, Ilias Ali, Sajedul Islam Sumon, Sagar-Runi and many more, so that injustices are not repeated.

SEE PAGE 8 COL 1



Natural disasters internally displaced 4.96m: IOM study

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Nearly 4.96 million people are currently internally displaced persons (IDPs) due to natural disasters in Bangladesh, according to the International Organisation for Migration (IOM), in its first comprehensive nationwide estimate.

The report highlights how floods, cyclones, river erosion and other hazards continue to disrupt lives across the country.

Chattogram Division hosts the largest share of IDPs with 1.21 million, followed by Dhaka with 0.79 million and Rajshahi with 0.66 million, the report said.

Four districts -- Chattogram, Sirajganj, Bhola and Noakhali -- account for a quarter of all displaced persons. Most IDPs, about 85 percent, live in rural union areas, said the report, which was released yesterday.

The report was prepared by the IOM, in partnership with the government of Bangladesh and development partners.

The assessment found that two out of three IDPs were displaced before April 2020, indicating long-term unresolved displacement. One in four were displaced between April 2020 and April 2024.

The assessment covered all eight divisions, 64 districts, 4,579 unions, 329 municipalities and 480 city

corporation wards. Data collection took place between September and October, including more than 5,300 field visits and interviews with more than 29,000 key informants.

Understanding the scale of displacement is essential for effective disaster management and long-term planning, said Lance Bonneau, chief of mission of IOM Bangladesh.

Chattogram division hosts the largest share of internally displaced people with 1.21 million, followed by Dhaka with 0.79 million and Rajshahi with 0.66 million.

Says the IOM report, prepared in partnership with the government and development partners

The findings give national authorities, local leaders and development partners a shared foundation to respond to displacement with greater clarity and coordination, he added.

Government representatives welcomed the report as a major step

SEE PAGE 8 COL 6

SHEIKH HASINA'S EXTRADITION

Nothing to do if India does not agree

Says Touhid



DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh can do nothing if India does not extradite the deposed prime minister Sheikh Hasina, except for continuing the efforts to persuade India, Foreign Adviser Touhid Hossain said yesterday.

"There is nothing to do if India does not agree," he told reporters at the foreign ministry yesterday.

He was responding to questions from journalists about Indian External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar's remarks on Hasina's deportation.

In an interview on December 6, Jaishankar said Hasina's stay in India is her personal decision, influenced by the

SEE PAGE 8 COL 4

Gazette out on the police commission

Govt nod required for making regulations

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government has finally issued the long-awaited gazette on establishing a Police Commission empowered to recommend measures to strengthen discipline, accountability, and overall effectiveness within the force.

The five-member body will be led by a retired judge of the Supreme Court's Appellate or High Court Division and will recommend a panel of three candidates for the post of inspector general of police.

However, the commission will need government approval to frame any regulations, which will be issued through separate gazettes.

According to the law ministry's gazette notification published on Tuesday, the commission will include a retired government official with district magistrate-level experience or equivalent to Grade-1 in the National Pay Scale; a serving or retired professor with expertise in a relevant field; and a human rights activist with at least 15 years of experience in rights development, implementation, or promoting good governance.

It will also include a retired police officer of at least additional IGP (Grade-1) rank, who will serve as member secretary.

To ensure gender balance, the commission must have at least two female members. The chairperson will retain the rank they held before retirement, while the government will determine the ranks of the other members.

The president will appoint the chairperson and members based on recommendations from a government-formed selection committee, with terms of up to four years.

SEE PAGE 8 COL 4



Rescue ongoing since 2yr-old fell into shaft yesterday

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A massive rescue operation is underway in Rajshahi's Tanore upazila as a two-year-old boy, Sazid, fell into an abandoned deep tube-well shaft about 30 feet deep yesterday afternoon.

The incident occurred around 1:00pm at Koel Hat Purbo Para village in Panchandar union, police said.

By 10:50pm, rescuers had managed to dig nearly 18 to 20 feet underground, confirmed Tanore Fire Service official Abdur Rouf.

At least three Fire Service units continued working till late last night in a desperate attempt to rescue the boy alive. "Every effort is being made to bring the child out safely and unharmed," Rouf said.

Since 5:30pm, an excavator has been digging a parallel pit beside the shaft while two tractors removed soil. Oxygen was being supplied continuously into the hole to keep the child alive.

According to police, the incident unfolded after a soil-laden trolley

SEE PAGE 8 COL 4



A rescue operation underway after a two-year-old boy fell into an abandoned deep tube-well shaft, about 30 feet deep, in Rajshahi's Tanore upazila yesterday afternoon. Firefighters, along with locals, were digging the ground next to the shaft to rescue the child.

PHOTO: COLLECTED

Cooking oil waste yields glue strong enough to tow car

INDEPENDENT.CO.UK

Scientists have developed a way to turn cooking oil waste discarded by restaurants into recyclable plastic and a superglue strong enough to tow a car.

The new method could be a sustainable way to create new household materials from non-edible waste.

Researchers, including those from the University of South Carolina, have found a way to use discarded cooking oil to make "mimics" of polyethylene or polythene -- the material commonly used in plastic bags.

"Waste streams offer a potentially attractive alternative to biomass-derived feedstocks [to make plastics]," scientists wrote in the study.

These new materials have a chemical structure and physical behaviour resembling that of polyethylene (PE), they say.

Cooking oil is made of long fatty acid chains, and researchers found that a series of chemical reactions can turn them into long polymer chains, mimicking those in polyethylene.

