

It's a path

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His assistance helped plan the large-scale recovery, documentation, and identification of victims of the July uprising, in line with international standards, particularly the Minnesota Protocol on the Investigation of Potentially Unlawful Death.

On December 1, 2025, a member of the Forensic Advisory Group, summoned by the special rapporteur, travelled to Bangladesh to support the final preparations and oversee the exhumations, which began on December 7, 2025.

The bodies correspond to people killed during the uprising, who were recovered from the streets of Dhaka and buried at Rayerbazar cemetery by the charity Anjuman Mufidul Islam. While efforts were made at the time to respect the dead and protect their dignity, identification was not possible.

"In addition to helping families attain truth and justice, this investigation is a unique opportunity to strengthen Bangladesh's medico-legal and forensic capacity according to international standards such as the Minnesota Protocol," Tidball-Binz said.

According to an OHCHR report, approximately 1,400 people were killed during protests in Bangladesh between July 15 and August 5, 2024. Most deaths were caused by security forces, and 12-13 percent of those killed were children.

The report described the violence as part of a systematic effort by the then government to suppress dissent, resulting in widespread human rights violations, including extrajudicial killings and arbitrary arrests.

Last month, Bangladesh's International Crimes Tribunal sentenced the deposed prime minister, Sheikh Hasina and her cabinet minister, Asaduzzaman Khan Kamal, to death for crimes against humanity.

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RAJKANDI RESERVE FOREST

Illegal constructions threaten biodiversity

MINTU DESHWARA, Moulvibazar

The Rajkandi Forest Range, one of the country's richest natural forests and home to rare wildlife, dense vegetation, and bamboo groves, is under growing threat due to the construction of unapproved structures within its boundaries.

For decades, only mud houses were permitted for the residents of Kalenji village, located inside the Rajkandi Forest Range in Kamalganj upazila, Moulvibazar. These villagers have been appointed by the Forest Department as caretakers of the forest.

However, a recent visit revealed that around 100 families were living in the area, with several brick-built structures along the roadside. Some of these houses appear to have been constructed recently, allegedly with the knowledge of certain forest officials.

The forest spans 20,270 acres, covering the Adampur, Kurma, and Kamarchhara beats, and is part of the Indo-Burma biodiversity hotspot. It is home to 549 species of flowering plants from 123 families, as recorded in a 2018 study published in the Bangladesh Journal of Plant Taxonomy.

The forest also hosts rare species such as golden cats, Asiatic black bears, serows, pangolins, small-clawed otters, and nearly 300 bird species, many of which are listed

under the CITES convention of 1973.

Local residents claim that such constructions would not be possible without official approval. At least three families -- those of Nurnabi, Abdul Nabi, and Moheb Ullah -- have reportedly built new houses in violation of forest laws. However, the homeowners declined to comment when approached.

Nurul Mohaimin Milton, general secretary of the Bangladesh

villagers also accused forest officials of turning a blind eye to the issue. "Forest officers visit daily. Nothing happens without their knowledge. This means someone is allowing the construction of brick houses," said Mohammad Idris, a farmer.

Nurul Mohaimin Milton, general secretary of the Bangladesh



PHOTO: STAR

Abdul Karim, a local resident, said, "While we have been living here for generations in mud houses, some people managed to build pucca houses in recent years. We don't know how they got permission."

Sufia Begum, another villager, expressed concern about the forest's future: "Earlier, the forest was dense and full of animals. Now, new houses are being built, and trees are disappearing. We fear the forest will disappear one day."

Environmental Journalists' Association in Moulvibazar, called for immediate action, including enhanced surveillance, demolition of illegal structures, and the rehabilitation of affected families to prevent irreversible damage to the forest.

Rajkandi Forest Range Officer Md Mamunur Rashid acknowledged the issue, stating, "Pucca houses are not permitted inside the reserved forest. I will look into the matter."

CID partners with foreign firm to recover

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five lakh people from Dhaka, Barishal, Rajshahi, Cumilla, Naogaon, Kushtia, Brahmanbaria, and Satkira may have been affected.

CASE FILING AND VICTIM'S ACCOUNT

One of the victims, Maruf Rahaman Mahim from South Banasree in Khilgaon, said he was persuaded to invest by Mobashirul Ebad, the husband of his mother's friend.

Ebad promised that an investment of \$201 would generate \$5 profit per day, five days a week, along with commissions for recruiting new investors.

In June 2023, Mahim created an account under

Mohammad Masud Alam, MTFE "ambassador" Ebad, and 50-60 unnamed individuals. The case was later transferred to CID.

HOW INVESTIGATORS TRACKED THE MONEY

CID learned through the investigation that Sri Lankan authorities had recovered MTFE-linked funds from the cryptocurrency exchange OKX.

CID then contacted OKX, which requested documentation.

With assistance from the US Embassy in Dhaka, investigators confiscated crypto assets worth Tk 45 crore stored in MTFE-linked wallets on the platform.

To repatriate the funds, CID signed an agreement

with Asset Reality Limited on November 11.

The company will receive the confiscated crypto from OKX, liquidate it, and transfer the money to Bangladesh, charging a 2.5 percent fee. A Sonali Bank account has been opened to receive the funds.

The seized funds are currently held as cryptocurrency in an OKX wallet. Since crypto is not legal in Bangladesh, we cannot bring it back directly. Asset Reality will convert the funds into dollars and send them to us," the CID chief said.

He added that a portion will be sent first as a test run, followed by the remaining amount in phases.

The survey also highlighted the productivity of these containers in breeding adult mosquitoes. The highest productivity was found in flooded floors (47.27 percent), followed by basements or parking areas (16.80 percent) and sealable plastic drums (9.26 percent).

"If these hotspots are not controlled, dengue transmission will continue through winter," Bashar warned.

To combat winter dengue, he recommended that local government institutions implement hotspot-based control strategies. After identifying the addresses of infected patients, rapid fogging should be carried out in those areas to prevent the spread of infected mosquitoes.

Fogging outside these zones, however, is unnecessary

Why is dengue still

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and chikungunya increases sharply, which explains why infections persist even in winter.

Referring to a joint study by Dhaka North City Corporation and Jahangirnagar University, Bashar noted that while rainwater accumulation diminishes in winter, many locations still hold water throughout the year.

These include water stored in basements of buildings under construction, buckets or drums kept for water storage, particularly near bathrooms, Wasa meter chambers, car-washing areas inside high-rise parking spaces, and blocked drains and sewers.

"These locations become significant breeding sites during winter. Without rainfall, Aedes mosquitoes target these spots to lay their eggs, leading to concentrated outbreaks in certain areas or households -- what we call scientific 'hotspots,'" he explained.

A recent survey identified breeding sources, with 16.67 percent of cases found in basements or parking areas, 12.96 percent in plastic buckets and water meter holes, and 9.26 percent in gate channels. Other common breeding sites included plastic drums, flower tubs, water tanks, and metal containers.

The survey also highlighted the productivity of these containers in breeding adult mosquitoes. The highest productivity was found in flooded floors (47.27 percent), followed by basements or parking areas (16.80 percent) and sealable plastic drums (9.26 percent).

He added that authorities have a narrow window to act.

"If preventive measures are implemented now, they may delay the usual dengue surge that follows the first rains in March or April," he said.

From hope

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boat journeys to Italy across the Mediterranean Sea. While some reached Europe, many died tragically on the way.

Officials say that Bangladesh currently ranks highest among all nationalities attempting to enter Europe illegally by crossing the Mediterranean.

This year, 18,034 Bangladeshis were identified while entering Italy by sea until October, compared to 14,397 in 2024 and 14,285 in 2023, according to the EU border agency Frontex.

Shariful Hasan, associate director of BRAC's Migration and Youth Platform, told The Daily Star that many Bangladeshis attempt to reach Europe via Libya, where traffickers detain and torture them for ransom.

"This year the situation has reached unprecedented levels," he said.

He noted that most victims come from three regions: Madaripur-Shariatpur, Sylhet-Sunamganj, and Narsingdi-Bhairab.

Their routes typically include Dubai, Egypt, and then Libya, he said.

Shariful stressed that the government must raise awareness in these regions.

"Law enforcement must not only arrest one or two members of the syndicate but investigate and take action against the entire network whenever new information arises," Shariful said.

Action must also be taken against those operating abroad, he added.

He urged the government to implement measures that would allow people to travel to Europe through legal channels, helping them avoid illegal routes.

Country's situation

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of false cases, and the resignation of the home and cultural advisers.

They also called for investigations into attacks on Baul, Sufi, mazar, and other culture-friendly communities, along with the arrest and punishment of those responsible.

Other demands included reinstating the recruitment of music and physical education teachers in primary schools; ensuring

state protection for cultural and religious events such as pala gaan, drama, jatra, fairs, and urs; and protecting freedom of expression.

The organisers urged an end to state support for "fascist activities in the name of religion". They also demanded action against violence based on gender, profession, ethnicity, ideology, or personal lifestyle. A torch procession was held after the cultural gathering.

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh

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Reference No: 35.01.0108.400.16.049.25-2172

Date: 11-12-2025

e-Tender Notice (Re-Tender)

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

Sl No	Package Description	Tender Document Last Selling Date & Time	Tender Closing & Opening Date & Time	Tender Security Submission Last Date & Time
1	e-GP/ADP/01/WP-02A/EE/BRD/2025-2026 (Re-Tender). (ID-1193200) Remaining works of Construction of 10 Nos PC/RCC Girder Bridges at different location on Fakirhat (Diabari) Madrashaghat-Mollahat (Boalia) Road (Z-8409) of Road Division, Bagerhat under "Construction of Concrete Bridges in Existing Narrow & Damaged Concrete Bridge/ Bailey Bridge on Highway under Khulna Zone" Project during the year 2025-2026 (WP-02(A)).	28-12-2025 05:00 PM	29-12-2025 13:00 PM	29-12-2025 12:00 PM

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 required in the National e-GP System Portal (www.eprocure.gov.bd).

The fees for downloading the e-Tender document from the National e-GP System Portal have to be deposited online through any registered bank branches up to 28 December 2025, at 05:00 PM.

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

(Md. Ashraful Islam Pk.)

ID No-602162

Executive Engineer, RHD

Road Division, Bagerhat.

GD-2727

Asif Mahmud

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position ranked between third and fifth, after the convener and member secretary.

As all these posts were already occupied, the party was unable to accommodate his request. Even creating a new position would have required time to formalise procedures and establish relevant rules, they said.

Meanwhile, sources said Nasreen Sultana Mily, joint general secretary of AB Party -- one of the three components of the NCP-led Gonotantrik Sangskar Jote -- also intends to contest the election from Dhaka-10.

Overall, the prospect of Asif Mahmud joining the NCP has become increasingly uncertain.

On the other hand, the BNP has already nominated Sheikh Rabibul Alam, a member of its executive committee, for the Dhaka-10 constituency. Asif, previously at the helm of LGRD and sports ministries, handed his resignation from the adviser post to Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus on December 10.

On November 9, Asif registered as a voter under the Dhaka-10 constituency.

Originally from Cumilla, Asif joined the interim government as a student representative on August 8 last year.

PRAYER TIMING

DECEMBER 13

Fazr Zohr Asr Magrib Esha

AZAN 5-15 12-45 3-45 5-19 7-00

JAMAAT 5-50 1-15 4-00 5-22 7-30

Magrib Esha

5-15 12-45 3-45 5-19 7-00

Magrib Esha