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ইসলামী ব্যাংকিং সেবা প্রদানে "ইসলামী ব্যাংকিং কর্ণার" পূবালী ব্যাংকের সকল শাখা এবং উপশাখায়

## CA holds reception for Begum Rokeya Padak winners

BSS, Dhaka

Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus accorded a reception to the "Begum Rokeya Padak 2025" winners at the State Guest House Jamuna in Dhaka last evening.

Dr Rubhana Rakib, Nabila Idris, Kalpana Akter and Ritu Parna Chakma won the prestigious award this year.

At the outset of the event, the "Begum Rokeya Padak" recipients expressed concern over the attack on Sharif Osman Hadi, one of the leaders of the July uprising and spokesperson of Inqilab Moncho and a potential independent candidate from Dhaka-8 constituency, according to Chief Adviser's Press Wing.

They urged the government to take strong action over the incident.

The award winners said

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Eminent economist Prof Rehman Sobhan and other distinguished guests cut a cake to mark the 50th anniversary of University Press Limited at a celebratory event held at The Daily Star Centre in the capital yesterday.

PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON

## Freedom to publish will define our democracy

Says Prof Rehman Sobhan at event marking University Press Limited's 50th anniversary

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Eminent economist and political analyst Prof Rehman Sobhan yesterday expressed concern over the growing mob culture of book burning and attacks on publications which are deemed inappropriate by certain groups.

"This is a very dangerous culture. It takes us back to Nazi Germany and the book-burning practices of that time. I hope this is not something we will see in this new era, which we hope will be democratic," he said.

He made the remarks at an event marking the 50th anniversary of University Press Limited (UPL), an academic publishing house founded by Mohiuddin Ahmed in 1975. The event was held at The Daily Star Centre.

Prof Sobhan said publishers should be free to publish books representing a wide range of views, without regard to the identity or background of the author.

He said this freedom would indicate whether society has truly moved towards a liberal and democratic order.

Referring to recent incidents, he said

some publishing houses have already faced pressure from what he described as an emerging mob culture that finds certain publications unacceptable.

Prof Sobhan said he and Prof Rounaq Jahan have written several books critical of governments, which were often met with concern about how they would be received.

**Publishers should be free to publish books representing a wide range of views, without regard to the identity or background of the author. This freedom would indicate whether society has truly moved towards a liberal and democratic order.**

He noted that English-language publishing has sometimes been protected because those in power do not read much, though intelligence agencies occasionally scrutinise books and flag content they consider "inappropriate".

He said this places a responsibility on publishers, who must show courage in

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## Country drifting from agrarian roots: speakers

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh is drifting away from its agrarian roots as farmland shrinks due to infrastructure projects and young people turn away from farming, speakers said at a conference yesterday.

They called for urgent measures to reverse the trend and protect the environment at the conference titled "Protection of Rivers, Forests, Hills, Agricultural Land, Environment and Natural Resources," held at Parjatan Bhaban in the capital.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

- Raise awareness
- Promote environmental education
- Take long-term strategies

The event was jointly organised by the Association for Land Reform and Development (ALRD), Bangladesh Environmental Lawyers Association (BELA), and the Water Rights Forum.

In her address, BELA Chief Executive Advocate Taslima Islam said Bangladesh is losing rivers, forests, hills, and farmland every day, with marginalised communities suffering the most.

She said Bangladesh ranked 175th

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## 12yrs on, no closure in Gopibagh 6 murder case

EMRUL HASAN BAPPI and SHAHEEN MOLLAH

Abdullah Al Faruk still shivers thinking about the evening that shattered his world.

On December 21, 2013, the then 23-year-old was away from their Gopibagh house in Dhaka when a group of assailants stormed in.

That absence saved his life but left him as the only surviving male member of his family.

Just before Maghrib prayer, unidentified attackers slit the throats of his 65-year-old father, self-proclaimed spiritual leader Lutfar Rahman Faruk; his elder brother Sarwar Islam Faruk, 35; and four of his father's followers - Shahin, Majibur, Monzurul Alam, and Rasel Bhuiyan.

The killers, however, spared Lutfar's wife Salma, four other women, two children, and one relative who were inside the house at that time. Law enforcers later rescued the eight, their hands and legs tied, mouths gagged.

Nearly 12 years have passed since that night of horror. Yet

for Abdullah and the families of other victims, the pain has not eased - and the wait for justice continues.

"Year after year goes by, but the investigation hasn't even been completed, let alone the trial. There is no progress at

**According to case records, investigators have sought at least 107 dates over the past 12 years to finish their probe. Yet, the investigation remains incomplete. The probe was first conducted by Wari police, then handed to the CTTC unit and, most recently, to the CID.**

all," Abdullah said, his voice heavy with disappointment. "I hear that one investigating officer comes, then another replaces him. That's how the case has been dragging on."

"My father and brother were murdered. People

can hardly imagine how completely a family can be ruined after such an incident. Of course, we want justice. We have also cooperated in every way," he told The Daily Star.

"Our only demand is that the real culprits face the highest punishment," he said.

At that time, a top Rab official told the media that disputes between religious groups might have been the reason behind the killings, as Lutfar used to describe himself as a "follower of Imam Mahdi" and wrote religious books.

Back then, an additional deputy commissioner (Wari division) of Dhaka Metropolitan Police (DMP) said a gang of 10 armed men carried out the murders. "It was a planned murder," he said.

On the day of the killings, Abdullah filed a case with Wari Police Station against 10 to 12 unidentified killers.

According to case records, investigators have sought at least 107 dates over the past 12 years to finish their probe. Yet, the investigation remains incomplete.

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## 'BNP won't run country like fugitive autocrat'

Says Tarique Rahman

BSS, Dhaka

BNP Acting Chairman Tarique Rahman yesterday said that if the party wins the next Jatiya Sangsad polls and forms the government, the BNP will not govern the country the way the Awami League did during its tenure.

"The way the Awami League ran the country in the past, we will not run the country in that way. We will bring about a change, and we will work for the welfare of the country. That's why we have presented this plan to you for building the nation... Insha'Allah, we

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## Compensate nations affected by climate change

Say speakers at Climate Justice Assembly 2025

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Two advisers of the interim government yesterday accused the Global North of failing to ensure climate justice and urged wealthy countries to provide proper compensation to climate change-affected nations like Bangladesh.

The Global North refers to industrialised and wealthier countries, mainly in North America, Europe, and parts of East Asia, which historically account for the largest share of global emissions.

The advisers made the remarks at the inauguration of the two-day Climate Justice Assembly 2025 at Sher-e-Bangla Agricultural University.

The assembly was organised by the climate and environmental citizens' platform Dhoritri Rokkhaiy Amra-Dhora, and was attended by hundreds of local and international activists, researchers, experts, and representatives of climate-affected communities.

Speakers expressed concern over the growing gap between global climate commitments and concrete action, and called for accountability and justice from wealthy countries responsible for climate change.

Social Welfare Adviser Sharmin S Murshid said Bangladesh, despite contributing very little to global carbon emissions, is among the countries most affected by the climate crisis.

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## Freedom fighters vow to uphold legacy of 1971

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Guerrilla fighters of the joint force formed by the National Awami Party (NAP), the Communist Party, and the Chhatra Union during the 1971 Liberation War yesterday took an oath to uphold the spirit of the historic struggle for independence.

They made the pledge at the Central Shaheed Minar in Dhaka, where surviving members of the guerrilla force, along with the family members of martyred fighters, gathered to commemorate their wartime sacrifices.

The day-long programme was organised by the NAP-Communist Party-Chhatra Union Special Guerrilla Force Coordination Committee.

Reading out the declaration at the gathering, former president of the Communist Party of Bangladesh (CPB) Mujahidul Islam Selim said, "The Liberation War was an armed political struggle built on the active participation, sacrifice, and self-sacrifice of the masses."

Highlighting the collective leadership of political parties and the sacrifices of ordinary people as the driving forces behind victory, Selim recalled the contributions of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman alongside national leaders such as Maulana Abdul Hamid Khan Bhashani, Comrade Moni Singh, Professor Mozaffar Ahmed, Sher-e-Bangla AK Fazlul Huq, and Huseyn Shaheed Suhrawardy.

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## LIBERATION WAR Chhatra Union launches 4-day programme

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh Chhatra Union's Dhaka University unit launched a four-day special programme yesterday at the Teacher-Student Centre of DU, marking the 1971 Liberation War.

Titled "Rokter Dolil", the event opened with four exhibitions and a cultural evening, "Muktir Gaan" (Songs of Liberation). It will run until December 16.

Shimul Kumbhakar, general secretary of a faction of Chhatra Union, said one of the exhibitions, "Razakarer Amolnoma", features various articles published in the Daily Sangram. Another, "Bijoy Gatha", highlights the nation's victory in the Liberation War.

The exhibition, "Opurno Gonojuddho", portrays the struggles people faced even

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Members of Naripokkho, a rights organisation, hold a candlelight vigil at the Central Shaheed Minar in Dhaka yesterday in memory of those who sacrificed their lives in the 1971 Liberation War.

PHOTO: PALASH KHAN