

# DHAKA

## NCP leader found dead

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Jannat Ara Rumi, a leader of the National Citizens Party (NCP), was found

dead yesterday morning at a women's hostel in the capital's Jigatala area, according to police. She was a joint coordinator of NCP's Dhamondi thana unit.

Hafizur Rahman, officer-in-charge of Hazaribagh Police Station, said upon receiving information around 4:10am, a team from the police station rushed to the spot and recovered her hanging body from a room on the fifth floor of Jannati Female Student Hostel at Jigatala's Old Kachabazar Road. Her body was sent to Dhaka Medical College Hospital for an autopsy.

Preliminary investigation suggests that she may have died by suicide, but the exact cause of death will be determined after the autopsy, the OC added.

The NCP, in a statement, SEE PAGE 9 COL 5

## 'DEVIL HUNT' 4,232 held in five days

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Over 4,232 people have been arrested by law enforcers over the last five days until yesterday evening under the "Operation Devil Hunt Phase-2", a special nationwide drive aimed at restoring law and order and recovering illegal arms ahead of the upcoming national election.

During the same period, another 3,120 people were detained in connection with previous cases and outstanding warrants.

The government launched the operation on Saturday following a spate of killings across the country, particularly after the shooting of Dhaka-8 aspirant and Inqilab Moncho spokesperson Sharif Osman Hadi.

In the 24 hours until yesterday evening, a total of 2,042 people were arrested -- 1,074 in previous cases and over outstanding warrants, and 968 under "Operation Devil Hunt Phase-2", according to Police Headquarters.

During the operation, law enforcers seized one pistol, one shotgun, one pipe gun, two magazines, 20 rounds of cartridges, four exploded gas shells, two unexploded gas shells, four bullets, nine crude bombs and several locally made sharp weapons.

Police also searched 22,990 motorcycles and 1,904 cars. The searches led to the recovery of one shotgun, three crude bombs, four locally-made weapons and three rounds of ammunition, and resulted in the arrest of five people.



On the occasion of International Migrants Day yesterday, the families of 26 Bangladeshi migrant workers who have been detained for a long time in various prisons in Libya formed a human chain in front of the Jatiya Press Club. They demanded for the swift release and safe repatriation of their family members who fell victim to human traffickers.

PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

## Shortage of manpower, budget hamper child mental health care

Says mapping study by BMU, BACAMH

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Lack of trained manpower, adequate budget, public awareness, and persistent social stigma are major obstacles to child and adolescent mental health (CAMH) services in the country.

Although there are just over 500 psychiatrists nationwide, only 21 are child and adolescent psychiatrists to serve the large number of children and adolescents with mental health conditions.

In addition, the number of government and private facilities providing CAMH services is very limited. Most facilities are Dhaka centric and tertiary-level, leaving thousands of potential service seekers without access to care.

As a result, effective implementation of existing policies, laws, and action plans, along with adequate budget allocation and utilisation, strong multi-sectoral collaboration, and increased public awareness are essential to improve CAMH services.

These findings and recommendations were outlined in "Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service Mapping in Bangladesh," jointly developed by the Psychiatry Department of Bangladesh Medical University (BMU) and the Bangladesh Association for Child and Adolescent Mental Health, with funding from Unicef.

The service mapping was conducted between April and June 2024 and was disseminated yesterday at a programme held at BMU.

According to the National Mental Health Survey 2019, the overall prevalence of mental disorders among children aged 7-17 years was 12.6 percent. The prevalence was 12.9 percent among rural children and 11.5 percent among

urban children.

At that time, the country's total population was 15.89 crore, with 40 percent under 18.

Presenting the findings, Sifat E Syed, assistant professor at BMU's Psychiatry Department, said the seven-member team conducted the study through in-depth interviews, desk reviews, and focus group discussions.

She said there is no dedicated national policy on CAMH.

Specialised CAMH services are available at BMU, the National Institute of Mental Health and Hospital (NIMH), government medical colleges in Dhaka, Pabna, Mymensingh, and Sylhet, Combined Military Hospitals (CMH), and some private hospitals.

However, there are only 55 inpatient seats available at BMU, NIMH, and Dhaka CMH combined.

Services are very limited at district and primary healthcare levels, and there is no system for providing community-based outpatient care, she added.

Although medicines for CAMH are available, government supplies are provided only to NIMH. Healthcare and district levels, she said.

In 2023, the total mental health budget stood at US \$173.5 million, which accounted for only 0.5 percent of the total health budget. The budget allocation for CAMH was not specified separately.

BMU Psychiatry Department Chairman Prof MMA Shalahuddin Qasar said half of all lifetime mental illnesses begin by age 14, and three-fourths by age 24, making preventive

SEE PAGE 9 COL 8

**SEXUAL ABUSE**  
Existing system failing to protect children at schools  
Says child-led study; experts urge adopting evidence-based approach

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Children in Bangladesh face widespread sexual harassment and abuse in schools, public spaces, and online platforms, while existing reporting mechanisms largely fail to protect them, according to a child-led national study.

The findings were shared at a national dialogue organised by the Association for Community Development (ACD), with support from ECPAT International, at a city hotel in the capital yesterday.

Speakers at the event urged authorities to adopt coordinated, child centred, and evidence-based approaches to prevent sexual exploitation and abuse of children.

The study was conducted under the project "Children Know Better: Making Child Participation the Key to Improving Effectiveness of Action Against Sexual Exploitation of Children". It was led entirely by children and drew on their own experiences and those of their peers in Rajshahi district.

Presenting the findings, child researchers Sumaiya Afrin Shyama and Sabiha Jannati Nisha said once the concepts of sexual harassment and abuse were explained, every child interviewed could recall direct or indirect experiences involving themselves or their peers.

The study found that children see schools and madrasas as both learning spaces and sites of risk. Many reported harassment by senior students and, in some cases, teachers, who allegedly used threats of poor grades or promises of better marks to coerce students.

Technology-facilitated abuse emerged as a major concern, with children describing it as more widespread than offline abuse.

They reported blackmail using images, fake online relationships, unsolicited explicit content, and the circulation of

SEE PAGE 9 COL 2

DHAKA FRIDAY DECEMBER 19, 2025  
POUSH 4, 1432 BS  
The Daily Star 3

## Govt okays ordinance allowing 'disappeared' status after 5yrs

BSS, Dhaka

The government yesterday approved the drafts of "Enforced Disappearance Prevention and Redress (Amendment) Ordinance 2025" and "Bangladesh Haor and Wetland Conservation Ordinance 2025".

The Advisory Council gave the approval at its weekly meeting at the Chief Adviser's Office with Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus in the chair, said the chief adviser's press wing.

The council approved the ordinance on enforced disappearance prevention with a provision that if a disappeared person remains missing for at least five years and does not return alive, the tribunal will be able to officially declare the person as "disappeared".

Under the ordinance, the government will be able to appoint the required number of public prosecutors for the "Enforced Disappearance Prevention and Redress Tribunal" based on recommendations from the National Human Rights Commission.

Victims or complainants will also be allowed to appoint lawyers to the tribunal at their own initiative. In addition, the spouse of a disappeared person or any dependent family member will be able to use the property of the disappeared person without prior approval from the commission.

SEE PAGE 9 COL 3

## ICT-2 accepts charges against Quader, 6 others

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The International Crimes Tribunal 2 yesterday took cognisance of charges against Awami League general secretary Obaidul Quader and six other leaders of the party and its affiliated organisations over alleged crimes against humanity committed during the July uprising last year.

The other accused are: AFM Bahauddin Nasim, AL joint general secretary; Mohammad Ali Arifat, former state minister for information; Jubo League chairman Sheikh Fazle Shams Parash, and general secretary Moinul Hossain Khan Nikhil; Chhatra League president Saddam Hossain and general secretary Sheikh Wali Asif Inan.

The three member tribunal, headed by Justice Nozrul Islam Chowdhury, issued arrest warrants against all seven, and instructed law enforcers to produce them before the tribunal by December 20, after the prosecution informed the court that they are absconding.

SEE PAGE 9 COL 6

## ACC initiates move to bring back Hasina Files charge sheet against Kamal, family

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Anti-Corruption Commission has initiated moves to bring back ousted premier Sheikh Hasina and several other fugitive convicted individuals in corruption and money-laundering cases.

It also filed a charge sheet against former home minister Asaduzzaman Khan Kamal and his family in separate cases filed over similar allegations.

ACC Director General Akhtar Hossain told reporters yesterday that the commission has contacted the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and other relevant authorities to facilitate the return of fugitive convicts, including Hasina.

Hasina was recently sentenced by a trial court to a total of 26 years in prison in four cases filed over forgery and illegal acquisition of Purbachal

SEE PAGE 9 COL 4



Scores of illegal make-shift shops have been set up on both sides of the railway tracks, making the spot particularly dangerous for pedestrians who are often forced to walk on the tracks to pass the area. Even though these shops are demolished during eviction drives, they just pop up once again a few days later. The photo was taken yesterday.

**We Mourn**

Our hearts are heavy with sadness for the loss of Mrs. Naz Mustafa (Founder and Principal of Dhanmondi Tutorial), wife of Late K G Mustafa (Former Add'l Secretary of GOB), daughter of K Z H Ali Abed, Grand Daughter of Khan Bahadur Khandaker Ali Tayab and Mohammad Abu Saleh. She left behind her only child, Dr Sultana Mustafa and host of relatives and friends.

We request your kind presence at the Dua Mehfil on Friday, 19 December 2025, 4:00 PM at Shanta Spring, House-8, Road-5, Dhanmondi R/A, Dhaka.



**Mrs. Naz Mustafa**  
1949-2025

Woman found dead in Kuakata hotel  
OUR CORRESPONDENT, Patuakhali

Police recovered the body of a tourist from a hotel in Kuakata on Wednesday night.

The deceased was identified as Fahima Akhter, 24. Her body was found in room 105 of the Alishan Hotel. The man who checked in with her, identifying himself as her husband, was not found at the scene, according to police.

According to hotel records, the man identified himself as Arif Hossain, of Pukurjana area in Patuakhali Sadar upazila. No address was mentioned for the woman.

Hotel staffers noticed the room was locked from the outside with no contact from the occupants, prompting them to inform police. Police broke the door open and found Fahima's body hanging from a ceiling fan.

Hotel owner Shahid Hossain said the couple initially rented the room for three days but later extended their stay.

They had been staying here since December 2, and there were no problems during this time. Yesterday [Wednesday] afternoon, I noticed the room was locked. When there was no response, even late at night, I looked through the window and saw the woman's body hanging from the fan. Her husband was not there, I immediately informed the police," he said.

Mahipur Police Station Officer-in-Charge Md Mohabbat Khan said police recovered the body and sent it to Patuakhali Medical College Hospital morgue for autopsy yesterday morning.

"A kabinamma [marriage certificate] was recovered from the scene. However, in the interest of proper investigation, details are being kept confidential. We are verifying the documents and information..." the OC added.

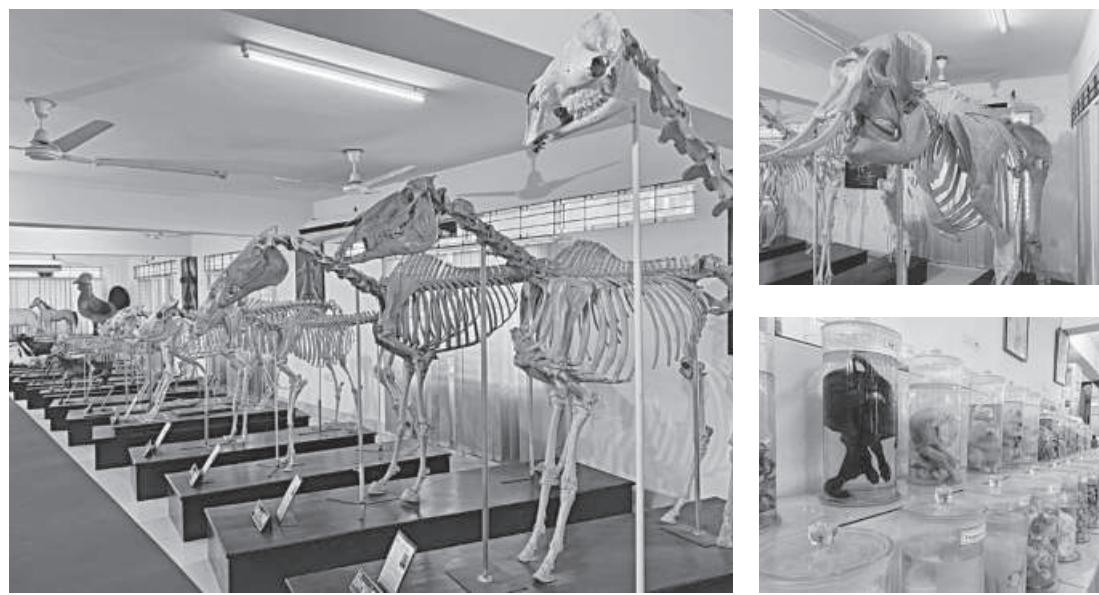


PHOTO: STAR

MOHAMMAD SUMAN, Ctg

The Anatomy Museum at the Chattogram Veterinary and Animal Sciences University (CVASU) offers visitors a glimpse of animal skeletons, taxidermy and preserved specimens, along with models of animals and birds.

Located in the port city's Khulshi area and spanning 3,000 square feet, the museum was inaugurated in 2017 under a project titled "Establishment of an Anatomy Museum for Enhancing Quality Education and Research in the Department of Anatomy and Histology", financed by the Higher Education Quality Enhancement Project of the University Grants Commission.

Stepping into the hall, a python's skeleton and a crocodile with its jaws gaping wide, as if ready to snap shut, welcomed this correspondent.

Numerous skeletons, including a human one and remains of a variety of animals and birds, were seen on display stretching as far as the eye could see.

Taxidermy specimens add

realism to the collection. Limbs and organs of animals, preserved in chemical solutions, are also on display.

According to CVASU sources, the museum currently houses about 60 skeletons, 30 taxidermy specimens, 20 animal and bird models, nearly 500 preserved limbs and organs, and around 3,000 different types of animal bones.

The collection also includes around 200 species of freshwater fish from different rivers, including the Karnaphuli and the Halda, and other waterbodies such as the Kaptai Lake and wetlands in Sylhet, and another 150 species of marine fish collected from the Chattogram and Cox's Bazar coasts.

Md Rasel Prank, a lecturer of the Department of Anatomy and Histology at CVASU, said the museum is being used for education, research and recreation.

"The specimens help students to identify differences in anatomical structures among different domestic as well as wild animals, terrestrial and aquatic species, and also amphibians," he

said.

"The skeletons, bones and specimens were collected from across the country since 2012, and the process of enriching the archive is still ongoing," Prank added.

Recently, a skeleton of a tiger has been added to the collection, university sources said. In addition, a giraffe skeleton received from the Bangladesh National Zoo was placed at the museum's entrance in 2023. Other notable exhibits include skeletons of an elephant, a camel, a crocodile and a large python.

"We get to work directly with the specimens as part of comprehensive learning," said Md Wasim, a student of CVASU.

Prank said teachers, students and researchers from across the country visit the museum for conducting research, and findings from these studies are being published in different national and international journals.

"General visitors, including students from different schools and colleges, also regularly visit the museum," he added.

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh  
Office of the Executive Engineer  
PWD Maintenance Division, Chattogram  
Phone: 02-334453126

Memo No. 25.36.1500.242.103.21.24.1800(3) Date: 17.12.2025

## e-Tender Notice (OTM)

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

e-GP Tender ID	Last selling date and time	Closing date and time
1189699	11-Jan-2026 10:00	11-Jan-2026 12:00

This is an online tender, where only e-Tender will be accepted in the National e-GP Portal.

  
Moniruzzaman Jitu  
Executive Engineer  
PWD Maintenance Division  
Chattogram

GD-2779

বাংলাদেশ ব্যাংক  
(সেন্ট্রাল ব্যাংক অব বাংলাদেশ) ব্যাংকার্স সিলেকশন কমিটি সচিবালয়

প্রধান কার্যালয়

মতিবিল, ঢাকা-১০০০

বিজ্ঞপ্তি নম্বর-১৬৫/২০২৫

তারিখঃ ০২ ফেব্রুয়ারি, ১৪৩২  
১৭ ডিসেম্বর, ২০২৫

ব্যাংকার্স সিলেকশন কমিটির সদস্যভুক্ত সোনালী ব্যাংক পিএলসি-এ ২০২২ সাল ভিত্তিক 'এসিস্ট্যান্ট ডাটাবেইজ এডমিনিস্ট্রেটর' (৯ম প্রেত) (Job ID: 10208) এর ১০টি শূন্য পদে নিয়োগের লক্ষ্যে এ

'কন্টেন্ট ও নথর বিভাজন সংক্রান্ত বিজ্ঞপ্তি'

ব্যাংকার্স সিলেকশন কমিটির সদস্যভুক্ত সোনালী ব্যাংক পিএলসি-এ ২০২২ সাল ভিত্তিক 'এসিস্ট্যান্ট ডাটাবেইজ এডমিনিস্ট্রেটর' (৯ম প্রেত) (Job ID: 10208) এর ১০টি শূন্য পদে নিয়োগের লক্ষ্যে এ

সচিবালয়ের বিজ্ঞপ্তি নম্বরঃ ০৬/২০২৪

তারিখঃ ১৮/১২/২০২৫

ব্যাংকিং ও আর্থিক সেবা পেতে হয়রানির শিকার হলে কিন্তু  
কেন্দ্রীয় অভিযোগ ধারকে ১৬২০৬ নথরে ফোন করুন।

GD-2790

CVASU ANATOMY MUSEUM  
In the realm of skeletons

## Three held with 1,600 magazine pouches

STAFF CORRESPONDENT,  
Cox's Bazar

Police arrested three people early yesterday in Cox's Bazar's Ramu upazila while they were allegedly attempting to smuggle 1,600 magazine pouches used with military firearms towards the Myanmar border, officials said.

The arrests were made around 2:00am at a police checkpost in the Joarianala tea garden area, where officers also seized a pickup allegedly used in the smuggling attempt, said Ramu Police Station Officer-in-Charge Munirul Islam Bhuiyan.

The arrestees were identified as Md Shahjahan, 25, Md Ilyas, 19, and Atikur Rahman, 25, all residents of Nai khyaingchhari upazila in Bandarban.

During a search of the vehicle based on intelligence inputs, police recovered the magazine pouches packed in 32 sacks, the OC said.

In preliminary interrogation, the suspects claimed the items were being transported towards the border for smuggling through illegal routes to an armed group in Myanmar. They also told police that the pouches were manufactured at a factory in Chattogram, he added.

Cases have been filed against the three under the Anti-Terrorism Act, and they were sent to court for further legal proceedings, the OC said.



PHOTO: STAR

## Star goes live with PeopleDesk HR system

STAR REPORT

The Daily Star has officially launched phase one of PeopleDesk, a locally developed digital human resource management system developed by AKIJ iBOS, marking a significant step in the organisation's digital transformation initiative.

The launch follows an MOU signed earlier last year between The Daily Star and AKIJ iBOS for implementing the HR solution. Phase one focuses on core HR data digitization and foundational people management processes.

The go live event was attended by senior officials from The Daily Star, including Mizanur Rahman FCA, head of operations &amp; CFO; Jahurul Islam, assistant general manager-accounts &amp; finance; Md Mahmudul Hasan Khan, head of HR &amp; admin; Md Tanvir Ahmed Sarkar, head of IT; Md Nomanuzzaman, manager-finance &amp; accounts; Md Istiak Ahmed Bappy, assistant manager-administration; and Fahad Hossain, senior executive-human resources. AKIJ iBOS representatives included Md Al Amin, CMO and CRO; Md Iqbal Hossain, CTO; Md Nazmul Haque Sabuj, AGM, business development; ARSM Nuray Alam Parash, product manager for PeopleDesk; and Shahinur Shamim, business analyst.

## Injured wild boar rescued at CU

CU CORRESPONDENT



An injured wild boar was rescued near Alao Hall of Chittagong University on Wednesday night.

CU officials believe hunters may have attempted to kill the boar using sharp weapons.

Johnny Roy, a sociology student who provided first aid to the animal, said the boar had been bleeding.

After treatment, the boar was released into the wilds yesterday, Johnny added.

বাংলাদেশ উন্নত বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়

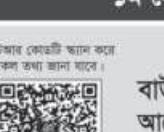
BANGLADESH OPEN UNIVERSITY

কৃষি ও পল্লী উন্নয়ন ক্ষেত্র

## এমএস ইন এথিকালচারাল সায়েন্সে

(এন্ডোমিনি, একোমোলজি, সরল সায়েন্স, ইলিমেশন এন্ড ওয়াটার স্যানেজমেন্ট, এক্সামাইলচারাল, পেন্সিপ্স সায়েন্স)

১ম সেমিস্টার (জানুয়ারি-জুন ২০২৬)

ভর্তি  
বিজ্ঞপ্তি  
৬ষ্ঠ ব্যাচ

চিকিৎসা কেন্দ্রীয় কার্যালয়

সকল ক্ষেত্রে কার্য করে

বাতুরি গাজীপুর ক্যাম্পাসে পরিচালিত

আবেদনের তারিখ: ১৮ ডিসেম্বর ২০২৫ থেকে ০৯ ফেব্রুয়ারি, ২০২৬

<https://www.facebook.com/Bdopenuniversity/>

বিস্তারিত জানতে

www.bou.ac.bd

GD-2778

UGC HEAT Sub-Project 13733

Bangladesh Biorefinery &amp; Biocrude Innovation Center (3BIC):

A Waste-to-Fuel Approach for Transforming Bangladesh's Energy Future

Department of Civil Engineering

Khulna University of Engineering and Technology (KUET)

Khulna-9203, Bangladesh

স্থারক নং:

তারিখ:

e-Tender Notice

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

Sl. No.	Tender ID No.	Package No.	Description	Online tender notice publication date	Online tender closing date
01	119252, KUET/13733/Y/1/G2/2025 Date: 17/12/2025	Goods (Dev.), KUET/13733/Y/1/G2/2025 Elemental/ CHNS Analyzer; High - Temperature Muffle Furnace / Oven/Autoclave Open Tendering Method (OTM)	Supply of Elemental/CH NS Analyzer; High - Temperature Muffle Furnace /Oven/Autoclave	17 December, 2025	01 January, 2026
02	1192553, KUET/13733/Y/1/G3/2025 Date: 17/12/2025	Goods (Dev.), KUET/13733/Y/1/G3/2025 Fuel Analyzer Open Tendering Method (OTM)	Supply of Fuel Analyzer	17 December, 2025	01 January, 2026

This is an online tender, where only e-Tender will be accepted in the National e-GP Portal and no online/ 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 last selling/downloading the e-Tender documents from the National e-GP System Portal have to be deposited online through any registered banks branches.

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

  
Dr. Md. Khalekuzzaman  
Sub-Project Manager  
UGC HEAT SP-13733  
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Department of Civil Engineering  
Khulna University of Engineering & Technology (KUET)  
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GD-2781



## Home adviser must retract his comment

His order to police to arrest without charge is deeply problematic

It is deeply alarming to see Home Adviser Jahangir Alam Chowdhury issue a verbal directive to police officers to arrest people even without a case, an instruction that strikes at the heart of the due legal process. By issuing such an order, Chowdhury has constituted a fundamental breach of the law that he is supposed to uphold. In a society governed by rules, the police are only enforcers of the law. There must be a credible, specific complaint and a legal basis for arresting a citizen. A warrant, or at the very least, clear legal grounds (or reasonable suspicion) must exist as a safeguard against abuse. Yet the home adviser seems to have instructed the police to tear up this rulebook.

Chowdhury reportedly told the Narayanganj superintendent of police, "Whether there is a case or not against an Awami League criminal is irrelevant. You must immediately bring them under law. Failure to do so will result in action against you." The assertion that the existence of a case is "irrelevant" is stunning. In a democracy, a formal case is not a technicality; it is an essential prerequisite for any legal steps. By separating the power of arrest from the requirement of evidence, the home adviser is effectively inviting the police to act *ultra vires*—beyond their legal authority. Law enforcement agencies cannot be granted carte blanche to sweep up political opponents, or criminals, on presumption alone; this would erode the very legal system the interim government claims it is trying to restore.

The context for this directive is "Operation Devil Hunt Phase 2," a security drive that has detained nearly 2,000 people in just 24 hours. While the government has a legitimate duty to disarm and arrest violent actors and maintain public safety, it cannot do so by ordering the police to break the law. When a home adviser threatens punishment for police officers who refuse to arrest uncharged individuals, he poisons the chain of command, forcing officers into an impossible choice between their oath to the law and obedience to superior command.

The fact that he now appears to be taking his legal cues from those demanding these arrests is deeply worrying, even if their grievances against the previous regime are valid. If an individual has committed a crime, the proper course is clear: the police must file a case and obtain a warrant. Anything less is an abuse of power. If the police can arrest someone today without a case or evidence—simply because a person in authority brands them an "AL criminal"—then the country is sliding back into the dangerous territory it sought to escape not long ago.

The interim government must not repeat the repressive tactics used by the former regime. Chowdhury's order must be retracted immediately and publicly. Law and order cannot simply be restored by breaking the law.

## Efficient energy use is crucial

Recent gains show sustainable energy use strengthens economy

At a time when the country is grappling with high global fuel prices, dollar crisis, and persistent energy insecurity, a new report has revealed an encouraging finding. According to the Institute for Energy Economics and Financial Analysis (IEEFA), improved energy efficiency saved Bangladesh an estimated \$3.3 billion in the fiscal year 2023-24 by reducing fossil fuel consumption and avoiding energy imports equivalent to seven million tonnes of oil. This achievement clearly shows that efficient energy use is not only environmentally beneficial, but it could also be a vital economic strategy for the country.

The report attributes these savings to efficiency gains across households, industry, and the power system. Widespread use of LED lighting, along with energy-efficient fans and air conditioners, helped reduce electricity demand in homes. Meanwhile, industries upgraded boilers, furnaces, and captive power plants, and adopted waste-heat recovery technologies. Collectively, these measures enabled the economy to maintain the same level of output while consuming significantly less fuel.

These gains are also the result of long-term policy planning. The Energy Efficiency and Conservation Master Plan, adopted in 2016, set a target of reducing energy intensity by 20 percent by 2030. Between FY2014-15 and FY2023-24, energy efficiency reportedly improved by 13.64 percent, with momentum accelerating after FY2020-21, as global fuel volatility and domestic supply disruptions made efficiency a priority. IEEFA notes that Bangladesh is now on track to meet its national efficiency targets and updated climate commitments, potentially ahead of schedule. This is truly encouraging.

However, as the report rightly points out, vast opportunities remain untapped. Many captive power generators continue to operate inefficiently, and wider adoption of efficient motors, electric boilers, and modern machinery could further reduce fuel use and LNG imports. At the same time, stronger enforcement of appliance standards, building codes, and energy labelling is essential to secure real and lasting savings. Unfortunately, the recent increases in import duties on key components of LED lights and energy-efficient appliances could push price-sensitive consumers towards cheaper, inefficient alternatives. This is an issue the government must urgently review.

Energy efficiency has proven to be one of the most cost-effective ways to strengthen energy security, ease pressure on foreign exchange reserves, and build resilience against global fuel shocks. The government must, therefore, treat energy efficiency as a strategic national priority, ensuring close coordination among regulators, industries, and financial institutions to sustain and expand these gains. Equally important is accelerating the transition to clean energy. Without consistent policy support, enforcement, and incentives, Bangladesh risks sliding back into higher energy consumption and renewed dependence on costly fossil fuels.

## THIS DAY IN HISTORY

South Korea gets first female president

On this day in 2012, Park Geun-Hye became the first female to be elected president of South Korea.

# EDITORIAL

## Phulbari coal, power crisis, and a dangerous revisionism



Anu Muhammad  
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at Jahangirnagar University.

ANU MUHAMMAD

Regarding the Phulbari Open-Pit Coal Mining Project, the chief adviser's press secretary recently made a Facebook post suggesting that Bangladesh is facing a severe power crisis because coal at Phulbari was not extracted. He went further, implying that those who resisted the project are responsible for today's dependence on India and the resulting energy insecurity. When a press secretary speaks on a matter of such national importance, it is natural to expect the chief adviser to clarify his stance if the views expressed by his press secretary do not coincide with his. The reason for that is, the press secretary's post is not only misleading but also factually incorrect, historically distorted, and deeply unjust to a movement that remains one of the proudest examples of public resistance in Bangladesh's history.

The claim that Bangladesh would not have faced a power crisis had Phulbari coal been extracted is simply untrue. The proposed 30-year project by British company Asia Energy was based on open-pit mining, which would have required excavating vast areas of Dinajpur, destroying three-crop agricultural land across six upazilas in one of the country's most important food-producing regions. To reach the coal, underground water aquifers would have been permanently drained. Hundreds of thousands of people would have been forced from their homes, turning them into environmental refugees, many with nowhere to go but already overstretched cities like Dhaka. The environmental damage would not have been contained within Phulbari and its adjacent region. Given Bangladesh's dense network of rivers and wetlands, contamination would have spread far beyond the mining site, creating a cascading ecological disaster.

And in return for all this destruction, Bangladesh was offered only a six percent royalty. Eighty percent of the coal was earmarked for export. Even more absurdly, the plan included a railway line from Dinajpur to the project site to facilitate that export, with the cost to be borne by Bangladesh. In other words, the country would have lost land, water, food security, and livelihoods along with its coal resources, while paying to export its own coal abroad to ensure huge profit for the company. This was not development; it was an absurd project of a company to make super profit at the cost of unprecedented environmental destruction for the country, along with

its loss of agricultural land and human catastrophe.

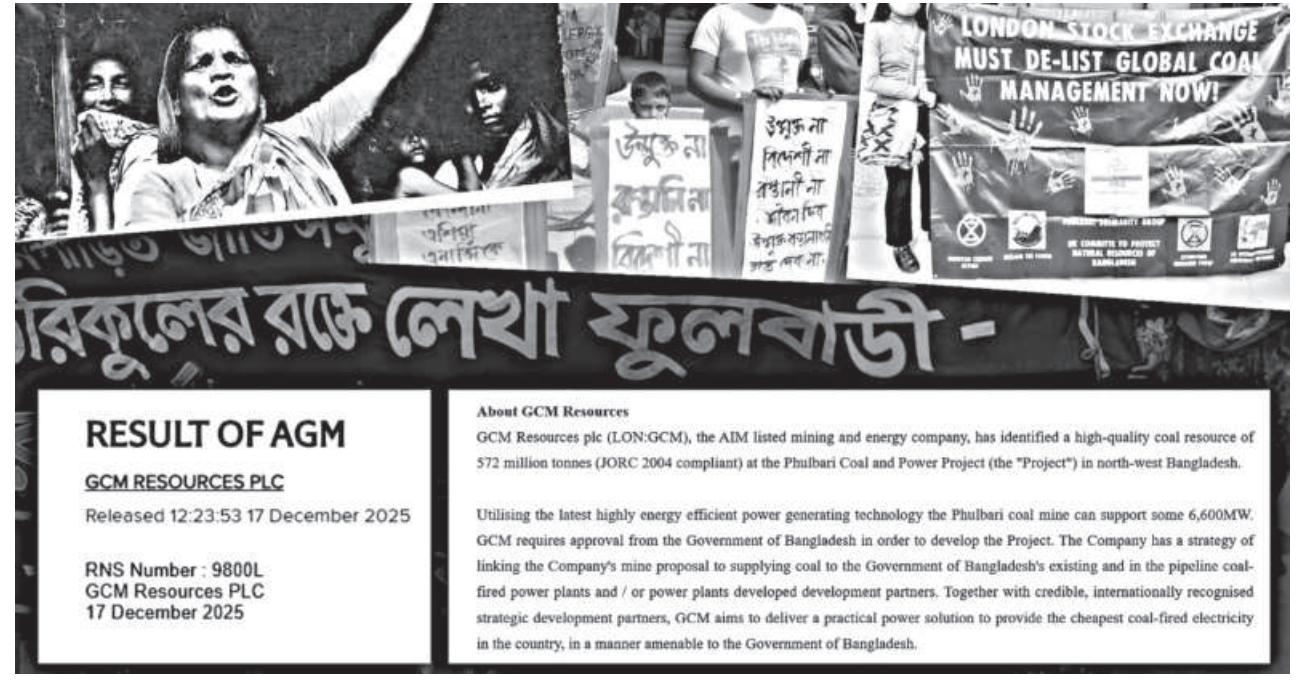
That is why people resisted. On August 26, 2006, more than a hundred thousand people gathered in Phulbari to protest the project. The then Bangladesh Rifles opened fire on the crowd. Three people were killed. Many more were injured. What followed was a mass uprising and protest across the country, which forced the then-government to retreat from signing the project with Asia Energy. Instead, the government signed the Phulbari Agreement with local people and the National Committee to Protect Oil, Gas, Mineral Resources, Port and Power as

and Banskhali despite sustained warnings that Bangladesh cannot afford to take the coal path to meet demand for power generation. Instead, the focus should be on investments in renewable energy and building national capability for domestic gas exploration. The past government did not listen; on the contrary, it adopted an expensive, environmentally risky, import-dependent energy model, increasing reliance on LNG (liquefied natural gas) and imported coal under the Power System Master Plan (PSMP). When global prices rose, the consequences were inevitable, and ordinary people are now paying the cost. Environmental problems are also accumulating. Trying to rationalise another destructive coal project to supply coal to these problematic power plants will only deepen the crisis and disaster.

What makes the FB post even more alarming is that it tries to rationalise a problematic corporate operation. Asia Energy, now operating as GCM Resources, does not hold a mining

agreements with foreign investors, including Chinese companies, projecting Phulbari as a future mine. No visible action has been taken by the present government to challenge or halt these activities. These activities are not harmless technical lapses; they are a continuing breach. The timing of the press secretary's statement is also significant as it was posted only one and a half weeks before the company's annual general meeting held on December 17. The FB post written in English is likely to convince hesitant shareholders that Bangladesh's government may revive the Phulbari project. This is how speculative share prices are inflated—through political signalling and lobbying. That's why the government must officially clarify its position immediately.

Besides, it is particularly disturbing to hear pro-coal lobby arguments coming from an official of the government, whose chief speaks globally of "Three Zeros"—zero carbon emissions, zero unemployment, and zero poverty. Supporting coal



### RESULT OF AGM

GCM RESOURCES PLC

Released 12:23:53 17 December 2025

RNS Number : 9800L  
GCM Resources PLC  
17 December 2025

### About GCM Resources

GCM Resources plc (LON:GCM), the AIM listed mining and energy company, has identified a high-quality coal resource of 572 million tonnes (JORC 2004 compliant) at the Phulbari Coal and Power Project (the "Project") in north-west Bangladesh.

Utilising the latest highly energy efficient power generating technology the Phulbari coal mine can support some 6,600MW. GCM requires approval from the Government of Bangladesh in order to develop the Project. The Company has a strategy of linking the Company's mine proposal to supplying coal to the Government of Bangladesh's existing and in the pipeline coal-fired power plants and / or power plants developed development partners. Together with credible, internationally recognised strategic development partners, GCM aims to deliver a practical power solution to provide the cheapest coal-fired electricity in the country, in a manner amenable to the Government of Bangladesh.

VISUAL:MONOROM POLOK

their representative just four days later, on August 30. Among local resistance movements in Bangladesh, Phulbari stands out not only for its scale but also for its global significance. It remains a rare example of a grassroots movement successfully stopping a powerful multinational project. To now blame that resistance for today's power crisis is to patronise that destructive project and to erase people's sacrifice, suffering, and democratic courage to uphold national interest.

Bangladesh's current energy crisis and import dependence did not emerge because coal was left underground in Phulbari. It emerged because of deliberate wrong policy choices. Over the past decade, the state pushed ahead with coal-based power plants such as Rampal, Payra, Matarbari,

licensure in Bangladesh. The company's Phulbari project was effectively cancelled after the mass uprising of 2006. Since then, the licence has never been renewed. Yet, year after year, the company has continued to trade on the London stock exchange market by presenting Bangladesh's coal resources as its asset (GCM Resources PLC filings), despite having no legal right to mine them. Successive governments have acknowledged this reality on multiple occasions, but no serious attempt has been made to stop the illegal use of Bangladesh's natural resources in foreign financial markets.

It is imperative to investigate the network of beneficiaries of this illegal share market business. The reason is that, even without any licence, Asia Energy continues to enter into

expansion does the opposite. It worsens environmental risk, displaces communities, and locks a country into an unsustainable economic path.

The government's responsibility now is clear. It must respect public resistance against a disastrous project, and not rewrite history to please corporate interests. It must fully uphold the Phulbari Agreement, stop Asia Energy's illegal activities in foreign markets, withdraw the false and harassing cases against Phulbari organisers, and commit to energy choices that are environmentally sound, economically rational, and rooted in public interest. Phulbari is not just about coal. It is about whether truth still matters in policymaking, and whether people's interest and their struggles still count in the future of this country.

## The gig economy's convenience has an unseen toll



Nahian Rahman  
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NAHIAN RAHMAN

Bangladesh's gig economy, such as ride-sharing, food delivery, courier services, has mushroomed in the last decade. For the urban middle class, it has turned Dhaka's traffic-clogged streets into a menu of instant conveniences: a car at your doorstep, biryani at midnight, medicine at the push of a button. For workers, it has opened new sources of income in a job market where formality is often a mirage. Yet, beneath this convenient opportunity lies a maze of human biases, where commuters and workers alike stumble in predictable, costly ways.

Take surge pricing. In theory, it is pure economics: higher fares balance demand and supply. But in practice, it preys on psychology. Few want to be stranded outside Bashundhara City Mall in a downpour or risk arriving late to an interview in Karwan Bazar. The "pain of paying" is dulled when urgency looms. People often treat an extra Tk 100 or Tk 200 as the price

of saving face, dignity, or dry clothes. This is loss aversion at work: the fear of inconvenience outweighs the pain of spending. Like an umbrella seller at New Market who doubles prices the moment the sky darkens, apps exploit the instinct that it is better to pay more than regret later.

Workers face their own psychological traps. Gig platforms shower riders with pings, bonuses, and multipliers—a digital gamification of survival. A rider may slog through Mirpur's gridlock for a Tk 50 bonus, not realising that fuel, time, and exhaustion quietly eat away at the reward. This is present bias: the lure of immediate cash eclipses long-term costs and riders often overestimate short-term wins while underestimating the toll on health, safety, and even family time.

The consequences ripple outwards. Consumers, hypnotised by convenience, often overspend; workers, nudged by psychological levers, often overwork for less than

expected earnings. What looks like freedom—the ability to choose when and how to work—can turn into an invisible treadmill. These dynamics are not unique to Bangladesh. Uber drivers in New York chase surge zones the way Dhaka riders chase Gulshan orders, and food couriers in Jakarta share the same complaints of exhaustion. However, in Bangladesh, where social safety nets are fragile, labour protections are thin, and digital literacy is uneven, the stakes are higher. In this context, cognitive biases are not just quirks; they can entrench inequality.

What, then, is the way forward? Behavioural economics offers not only diagnosis but also design. Imagine if ride-hailing apps showed a monthly spending tracker before you confirm your next ride: a gentle nudge reminding you that convenience costs add up like drips filling a jar. Or if delivery apps highlighted not just earnings but net earnings—what remains after fuel and time—helping riders see the hidden costs of "quick wins." Even something as simple as mandatory rest reminders, like the breaks enforced in factories, could prevent accidents and burnout.

Policy, too, must step in. Regulation could require platforms to make surge pricing more transparent. Bonuses could be restructured to reward sustainable patterns rather than punishingly long shifts. Training

programmes, offered through unions or NGOs, could help gig workers recognise traps like present bias and overconfidence. Because the first step to beating a bias is knowing you have one.

Bangladesh's digital platforms are becoming public infrastructure, as essential to urban life as buses or bazaars. And just as we regulate food safety or banking transparency, we must design digital labour markets with human psychology in mind. Otherwise, the shiny promise of convenience will mask a darker reality of exploitation.

The next time you accept a surge fare from Dhanmondi to Motijheel, or a rider races down Airport Road for a tiny bonus, remember these choices, in aggregate, shape the architecture of our economy: who prospers, who struggles, who gets left behind. Behavioural economics is the flashlight that reveals these invisible forces—and the map that can guide us towards a fairer, more humane gig economy. In a city where convenience often reigns supreme and patience is scarce, we must ask whether our choices will serve us, or whether we will remain passengers in a machine that profits from the quirks of our own minds. In the end, the cost of convenience is not just in taka; it is measured in the time, energy, and dignity that slip quietly through our fingers.

## THIS DAY IN HISTORY

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On this day in 2012, Park Geun-Hye became the first female to be elected president of South Korea.

# Bauls, ballots, and the price of weak institutions



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BOBBY HAJJAJ

The surest sign of a liberal democracy is not a flag, nor a constitution framed behind glass. It is the quiet competence of institutions—and the political culture that keeps them honest. One shapes the other the way a river shapes its banks, and the banks, in turn, discipline the river.

That is why the institutionalists keep returning to the same blunt lesson: prosperity and stability do not emerge from slogans, but from rules that bind the powerful and protect the ordinary. The modern canon has made this point in different registers—economists Daron Acemoglu and James A. Robinson's popular formulation of "inclusive" institutions, for instance. Besides, many other scholars have helped renew attention to the study of institutions within top-tier economic and policymaking research. Harvard Business School Professor Tarun Khanna and colleagues, writing from the trenches of emerging markets, named what citizens live with daily: "institutional voids"—the missing intermediaries, enforcement mechanisms, and credible regulators that make markets and democracies functional rather than theatrical.

Liberal democracy is a system of habits: impartial policing, predictable courts, professional bureaucracy, disciplined parties, a press that can wound vanity without being silenced, and a citizenry that does not confuse allegiance with worship. When these habits rot, ballots become costumes in a performance.

In a country like ours, religion supplies a large share of the moral vocabulary that becomes political culture. It is sociology. But it becomes combustible when a single, increasingly literalist and punitive style of religiosity pushes itself into every public space—especially in a society where state institutions are weak enough to be bullied by the loudest. Bangladesh's recent history has seen surges of conservative identification; in the streets, this often takes the form of "guardianship" over women's bodies, music, folk spirituality—over anything joyful that cannot be easily policed.

Political scientist Samuel Huntington's "Clash of Civilizations" thesis was never merely descriptive; in practice, it became a script that actors on all sides could perform. When global politics is reduced to civilisational camps—



VISUAL: ALIZA RAHMAN

"the West" and "Islam," each imagined as a single block—religion is pushed into the role of political identity, not only private faith.

Under Sheikh Hasina's long authoritarian arc, a particular narrative was sold abroad: the state as the last rampart against Islamist extremism. And authoritarian states love a single monstrous enemy; it lets them call every democratic demand "instability." After the 2024 uprising, Bangladesh entered a new period. What came with the regime's fall was not only relief; it was revelation—the true depth of institutional depravity, now visible because fear no longer covers it.

We are now scheduled to hold national elections on February 12, 2026. Yet, the air is still thick with the sense that rules do not rule; forces do. There is rising dissatisfaction with the interim administration amid delays on promised reforms, with renewed protests

to mobilise publicly after Friday prayers.

Then came the policing of women's public presence—not through law, but through vandalism and menace. In late January 2025, women's football events in Joypurhat and Dinajpur were cancelled after violence and pressure from groups identified as "Towhidi Janata," with injuries reported; even when authorities later ordered rescheduling, the message had already been delivered: women may play only by permission.

Around the same period, multiple prominent actresses did not attend planned public programmes, with reports of security concerns and local opposition surrounding such events.

And when the interim government's own Women's Affairs Reform Commission produced a report with hundreds of recommendations, backlash turned

grotesque. Viral images of men beating a sari-clad effigy of a woman with shoes on the Dhaka University campus and reports documenting derogatory public rhetoric against the commission and demands to abolish it became common.

This is the context in which the latest target has appeared: the bauls—Bengal's wandering metaphysicians, singing devotion without bureaucracy. Unesco describes baul songs

the other increasingly framed by some as a narrower religious identity suspicious of folk traditions. In that zero-sum contest, bauls are condemned not for violence, but for ambiguity—for refusing to fit cleanly into the boxes.

There is an irony worth underlining for the pious and the political alike. Conservative gatekeepers sometimes cite Imam al-Ghazali as a warrant for crushing "deviant" spirituality. Yet, al-Ghazali's own legacy is more complex: he famously attacked certain metaphysical claims of the philosophers in *The Incoherence of the Philosophers*, while his broader work helped make Sufism an acceptable part of orthodox Islam. And in Bengal, encyclopedic scholarship notes that Sufi saints and syncretistic practice were central to Islam's spread and its accommodation with local culture.

I have personally sat through a Friday sermon where a khatib described bauls as people who eat human excrement—malice dressed up as piety. Even if one believes baul metaphors cross theological lines, the cruelty of the propaganda is not proportionate to any alleged deviation. It is not *da'wah*; it is dehumanisation. And dehumanisation is how mobs prepare themselves.

So, the question institutionalism forces upon us is not only who is right, but who benefits when the state looks weak. When extremist street-power rises visibly in the absence of an autocrat, it can retroactively validate the autocrat's propaganda: "Only I can control the monsters."

In such conditions, any manufactured chaos becomes a bargaining chip—domestically and internationally.

To preserve democracy, we must reject extremist intimidation on principle. But we must also reject it tactically in the short term, because chaos is a currency spent by those who want to discredit electoral politics and re-legitimise authoritarian "order."

What should be done is, in fact, unromantic: enforce existing law consistently; prosecute violence regardless of banner; protect women's sports and cultural gatherings as ordinary public order duties, not "special permissions"; and defend freedom of expression without waiting for international embarrassment. Above all, rebuild institutional reflexes—police that respond to crimes rather than crowds, administrators who do not surrender the state's authority to whoever shouts loudest, and political parties that stop outsourcing public morality to mobs.

A democracy does not die only when a dictator returns. It also dies when citizens learn to whisper. And nothing teaches us to whisper faster than the sight of a state that will not stand between the vulnerable and the violent.

## Is selective amnesia the price of a new Bangladesh?



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ARAFAT RAHMAN

When a government prints too much money, the currency gradually loses its value. When a political party overuses history, that history too loses its value. This is exactly what happened to our Liberation War history. For over 15 years, the Awami League regime exhausted the moral capital of the Liberation War to justify everything from corruption to authoritarian control, commodifying the sacred until reverence became fatigue. The consequence has been corrosive. Today, many view symbols of the struggle not as national heritage, but as regime tools. Cynicism has taken the place of memory.

However, cynicism is no substitute for history. Discarding the gold because the miner was corrupt is a grave mistake, one that is turning into a dangerous national amnesia. That danger is visible on our streets, on our campuses, and in official conduct. Stand at any busy intersection in Dhaka today and shout "Joy Bangla," the slogan synonymous with the Liberation War, and you will feel it.

Sixteen months after what was hailed as a "second independence," uttering the slogan feels less patriotic and more like a personal risk. Words that once united a fractured nation against genocide now invite abuse, threats, assault, or branding as a traitor. This fear is the clearest measure of where we stand. I write this as a citizen who welcomed the end of the Awami League's authoritarian rule. Like millions of others, I suffocated under the grip of the last decade. I felt stifled by a one-party arrogance that commodified

1971 for political legitimacy. So, I wanted reform.

But in the bargain for a new future, I did not consent to the erasure of the history that made this republic possible. Citizens participated in an uprising to end a regime, not to lobotomise the nation's memory. The crisis we face is not merely about slogans. It is a moral inversion that was laid bare on Martyred Intellectuals Day, when Jamaat-e-Islami Secretary General Mia Golam Parwar claimed that "Indian agents" murdered our intellectuals, while a pro-vice chancellor of Chittagong University dismissed the Pakistani army's culpability as "absurd".

History is not a blank slate. Contemporary records, including Jamaat's own mouthpiece Dainik Sangram (1971), document the role of Al-Badr killing squads drawn from Islami Chhatra Sangha. The International Crimes Tribunal later judicially established Jamaat's culpable role in the systematic liquidation of intellectuals. Blaming "Indian agents" today is not revision; it is denial.

Shout "Joy Bangla" in the wrong crowd, and you risk being branded. For instance, in Muktagacha, Mymensingh, a Victory Day programme organised to honour freedom fighters was suspended after disorder broke out when veteran freedom fighter Bashir Uddin concluded his speech with the slogans "Joy Bangla, Joy Bangabandhu". A group of youths protested with counter-slogans, climbed onto the stage, and forced the upazila administration to halt the event.

By contrast, announce from a public stage that Pakistan did not kill Bangladesh's intellectuals, and you are shielded by the freedom of expression. We are fast building a country where it is physically dangerous to affirm the Liberation War, but increasingly safe to apologise for those who opposed our birth.

This corrosion has seeped into the imagination of the young. A Dhaka University student contesting in the Ducusu polls had shared a post in August in favour of pilot Rashid Minhas, who died stopping Bir Sreshtho Matiur Rahman from defecting. The post sparked a mixed reaction at the time. To celebrate the man who tried to strangle the birth of his own nation is a moral collapse.

This empathy for the oppressor is now being institutionalised. At DU, authorities were seen scrubbing away street portraits of Razakars. A similar sanitisation occurred at Chittagong University, where effigies painted on the floor were repainted. We have reached a point where the symbols of war criminals are protected from "disrespect," while the heroes of 1971 can be slandered.

That rupture is being reinforced through a campaign of renaming. Dismantling personality cults is defensible; erasing key actors of the Liberation War is not. At Rajshahi University, the Shaheed Tajuddin Ahmad Senate Building has been reduced to a generic "Senate Building." To erase the name of the wartime prime minister, who led the government while Bangabandhu was imprisoned, is to strike at the administrative core of the great 1971.

The ideological damage is mirrored by physical ruin. The Museum of Independence at Suhrawardy Udyana remains vandalised and shuttered. In Meherpur, hundreds of sculptures at the Mujibnagar Memorial Complex, where the provisional government took its oath, were destroyed. More than a year later, there is still no clear plan to restore these sites. Tenders

are missing, budgets opaque, and the message unmistakable: history can wait.

The same disdain shadows our cultural symbols. Demands to replace "Amar Shonar Bangla"—branded as an Indian imposition—are surfacing with disturbing frequency. Alongside this, a more poisonous ideology is growing. Popular religious speakers now tell packed gatherings that 1971 was a betrayal and that 1947 was the "real" independence.

To argue that Bangladesh's birth was a mistake is to revive the two-nation theory in new clothes. When such claims go unchallenged, they move from opinion to open contempt for the graves of those who died resisting that idea. Alongside this, in the aftermath of the July uprising, we are seeing a familiar attempt to audit the genocide itself. Was it really thirty lakh? Were the rape accounts exaggerated? This is how denial begins: by reducing mass murder and

sexual violence to a numbers game.

Even state rituals are shrinking. For the second consecutive year after the uprising, the Victory Day parade was cancelled despite no concrete security threat. When a government pleads poverty only to scale back Victory Day—while spending freely elsewhere—it signals not austerity but fatigue with the event that justified its existence. The tragedy of this moment lies in a false binary: that to be anti-fascist, you may have to be anti-1971. "Joy Bangla," we are told, belongs to a party, not to the people. But governments change; the war that created the republic does not. Because history is not a policy circular than an interim authority can repeal.

I want reform, as much as anyone. I want an independent judiciary, a professional civil service, and a press that does not live in fear. What I refuse to accept is that the ticket to this new Bangladesh is forced amnesia about the old one. The country that emerged

in 1971 is not a disposable draft. It was forged through Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman's vision; steered by Syed Nazrul Islam, Tajuddin Ahmad, M Mansur Ali and A H M Kamaruzzaman; fought for under General M A G Osmani's command; voiced by Ziaur Rahman on Bangabandhu's behalf; and sustained by unnamed students, farmers turned fighters and mothers who sent their children to war.

Walking through a capital stripped of its victory parade, I made my own observance. Regimes may try to hijack history, but victory never belongs to any party or government. It belongs to the people. Our responsibility now is twofold. We must reclaim 1971 from those who commodified it for power, and we must defend it from those who seek to distort it through denial, dilution, or manufactured narratives. In building a new Bangladesh, we cannot afford to insult the war that made the republic possible.

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh						
Office of the Executive Engineer, RHD						
Road Division, Rangpur						
E-mail: <a href="mailto:eran@rhd.gov.bd">eran@rhd.gov.bd</a>						
Date: 17-12-25						
<b>Invitation for e-GP Tender</b>						
This is to notify all concerned that e-Tender has been invited in the e-GP Portal <a href="http://www.eprocure.gov.bd">http://www.eprocure.gov.bd</a> for procurement of works. Interested person/firms can see details by visiting the <a href="http://www.eprocure.gov.bd">www.eprocure.gov.bd</a> .						
Sl No.	Tender ID No.	Tender Ref. No.	Description of works	Tender/ proposal document last selling date & time	Last date & time for tender /proposal security submission	Tender/ proposal opening date & time
1	1177282	e-GP-01/EE/ PMP- Major/ RHD/ RANG/ 2025-2026	Periodic Maintenance Program (Road-Major) by providing Widening and Surfacing work at Ch.11+400 km to Ch. 14+170 km (Mirbag Bazar to Bailey Bridge), Ch. 15+600 km to Ch. 18+006 km (Sohorab Brick Field to Kaunia Fire Station) & Ch.18+916 to Ch. 19+750 km (Nizpura to Traffic Police Box) of Rangpur-Barabari-Kurigram (N-506) Road, under Road Division Rangpur during FY 2025-2026.	28-Dec-2025 17:00	29-Dec-2025 12:30	29-Dec-2025 13:00

This is an online tender where only e-Tenders will be accepted in e-GP Portal and no offline and hard copy will be accepted. To submit e-Tender please register on the National e-GP System Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) is required. Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP System Portal and from e-GP help desk ([helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd](mailto:helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd)).

Md. Moniruzzaman  
ID No. 602274  
Executive Engineer (CC), RHD  
Road Division, Rangpur

## Daylong bus strike enforced in Cumilla

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Cumilla

The Cumilla District Bus Owners' Association yesterday observed a daylong strike by suspending bus services from Jangalia, Shashangchha, and Chawk Bazar bus terminals.

The strike was called following a dispute between two transport operators on the Cumilla-Chandpur route, causing much inconvenience to commuters on 40 routes across the district, including Cumilla-Dhaka, Cumilla-Chittogram, Cumilla-Sylhet, Cumilla-Chandpur, and Cumilla-Noakhali routes.

According to transport leaders, the strike was called demanding that Aidi Paribahan be barred from operating on the Cumilla-Chandpur route via the Jangalia bus terminal.

Md Tajul Islam, executive president of the association, said although Aidi Paribahan has permission from the Chandpur district administration, it has not obtained a route permit from Cumilla.

Without permission, some Aidi Paribahan buses were suddenly brought in to the terminal on Victory Day, and started operating from Wednesday, he added.

Aidi Paribahan chairman Mir Parvez Alam said they began operating buses on Cumilla-Chandpur route in 2023 after receiving permission from the Chandpur Deputy Commissioner's office.

However, from the very beginning, a syndicate within the Cumilla bus owners' group obstructed their operations. As a result, the Cumilla district administration did not issue a route permit, he alleged.

## Existing system failing

FROM PAGE 3 manipulated or AI-generated photos -- particularly of girls -- through platforms such as Facebook and Instagram.

Child marriage was also identified as a persistent problem, with children describing it as a form of sexual abuse rather than a family matter.

Many said early marriage is often imposed to protect family honour following harassment, rumours, or the spread of intimate images online.

The research highlighted serious barriers to justice, noting that reporting mechanisms often fail children. Many were unaware of helplines or found them inaccessible, while school complaint systems were seen as ineffective.

Fear of stigma, disbelief, and victim-blaming discourages reporting, the study said.

The findings also pointed to severe psychological impacts, including trauma, social isolation, and suicide attempts.

The study recommended establishing functional harassment complaint committees in schools, strengthening support centres, ensuring safer public transport, and enabling meaningful child participation in policymaking.

Attending as chief guest, NGO Affairs Bureau Director (Joint Secretary) Anwar Hossain said insights drawn from children's own experiences help policymakers better understand ground realities.

"Moving away from emotion-based responses to evidence-based decisions, and ensuring coordination between government and non-government actors, can make child protection initiatives more effective," he said.

He also stressed the need

## ACC initiates

FROM PAGE 3

plots through abuse of power. His son Sajeeb Wazed Joy, daughter Saima Wazed Putul, sister Sheikh Rehana, and Rehana's daughter Tulip Siddiq, also a British lawmaker, were also handed varying prison terms in the same cases.

Akhtar Hossain also informed that ACC has submitted a charge sheet against Asaduzzaman Khan Kamal, his wife Lutfun Tahmina Khan, and their two children -- Shafi Moddassir Khan Jyoti and Shafiq Tasnim Khan.

Kamal allegedly amassed assets worth Tk 22.58 crore beyond his known income sources during his tenure as home minister, while transactions amounting to Tk 87.46 crore were made through nine bank accounts in his name. The commission alleges that the funds were laundered to conceal their illegal origins.

His wife and children have been accused of assisting in concealing Tk 15.45 crore by constructing houses and operating businesses under their names.

In a separate development, the ACC also filed a case against former deputy speaker of parliament Shamsul Haque Tuku for acquiring Tk 3.59 crore illegally.

## Govt okays ordinance

FROM PAGE 3

The council also gave approval to the draft of the Bangladesh Haor and Wetland Conservation Ordinance 2025, specifying the responsibilities, authority, and jurisdiction of the Bangladesh Haor and Wetland Development Department.

It also included provisions for issuing protection orders to conserve biodiversity, the environment, ecology, and ecosystems of haor and wetland areas.

It includes provisions for declaring protected haor and wetland areas to ensure their conservation.

In addition, the ordinance specifies prohibited activities in haor and wetland areas, declares such (prohibited) activities as offences if committed, and provides for penalties for those offences.

Meanwhile, a proposal to establish a new Bangladesh embassy in Bern, the capital of Switzerland, was also approved.

## NCP leader found dead

FROM PAGE 3

the Awami League in Dhanmondi-32, Rumi expressed deep sorrow and concern, saying before her death, Rumi faced prolonged cyberbullying, death threats, and psychological harassment allegedly by Awami League-affiliated criminals.

Following these events, Rumi received repeated rape and death threats from multiple phone numbers, including threats against her family and property, some originating from abroad, NCP leaders said.

Samantha Sharmin,

senior joint convener of NCP, visiting Rumi's family at the DMC morgue, said,

"Just as the bullet that pierced Osman Hadi's brain shattered us, we now mourn the tragic death of our colleague Rumi."

"Women are falling victim to cyberbullying, yet the government has taken no action. Without ensuring women's safety, building a new Bangladesh is impossible," she said.

Samantha Sharmin,

## Shortage

FROM PAGE 3

intervention at the child and adolescent stage crucial.

Prof Md Faruq Alam, former director of NIMH, said around 10 percent of the country's mental health services are allocated to CAMH, even though nearly half of the population could potentially require such services.

He said with only 21 child and adolescent psychiatrists nationwide, authorities must take steps to produce more trained professionals.

Mahbubur Rahman, director of NIMH, said social stigma surrounding mental health remains a major challenge, and eliminating it would be difficult unless services are expanded and made widely accessible.

Noting that the number of psychiatrists cannot be increased overnight, he added that mental health services should be integrated into the existing preventive healthcare system.

Prof Md Shahinul Alam stressed the need to raise awareness about mental health and recommended incorporating the issue into the school curriculum, alongside strengthening relevant policies and programmes.

BMU Pro-Vice Chancellors Prof Md Abul Kalam Azad and Prof Md Mujibur Rahman Hawlader, among others, spoke at the programme.

## ICT-2 accepts charges

FROM PAGE 3

Prosecutor Gazi Monawar Hossain Tamim read out the formal charges. Quader was accused on three counts of issuing directives, instigation and provocation that allegedly led to attacks on and killings of unarmed protesters. Separate charges were also read out against the other accused.

The GD was received by Sub-inspector Md Mahmudul Hasan Moral, while the then OC of Dhanmondi Police Station, Kyshinu, was directed to take action.

Confirming the matter, current OC Saiful Islam told The Daily Star, "After she filed the GD, the case was under investigation. We were trying to trace the accused, and the probe is still ongoing."

Members of NCP's Dhanmondi unit said on November 13, during a "lockdown" called by

responsibility, while the others were charged due to their leadership positions and command roles within their respective organisations.

According to the chief prosecutor, alongside police and other forces, the Awami League, Juba League and Chhatra League members acted as "auxiliary forces" during the violence, which had been "clearly established" during the investigation.

"They directly participated in attacks, brutally suppressed the student movement, carried out killings, tortured people, caused permanent injuries, unlawfully detained individuals and committed other crimes," he alleged.

Reiterating the government's commitment to ensuring justice, Tajul said investigations had been completed, reports submitted and charges filed.

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Ref. No. 28.16.9100.095.70.001.25.166

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আর বিপদকে ডাকা একই বিষয়

Dated: 18 December 2025

## e-Tender Notice

This is to notify all concern that the following tender have published through National e-GP Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>).

Sl. No.	Tender ID, Package No. & date of publishing	Name of the work	Tender last selling and closing date & time
01	e -Tender Id: 1190013 Package No. JGTDSL.PL.PW-09 Date of publishing: 18 December 2025	"Modification of Lakkatura DRS and interconnection of DRS outlet with 60 Psig existing gas distribution pipeline in Sylhet City Corporation Area."	Last selling: 30-Dec-2025, 21:00 Closing date & time: 31-Dec-2025, 15:00 Opening date & time: 31-Dec-2025, 15:00

The interested persons/firms may visit the website <http://www.eprocure.gov.bd> to get the details of the tender. This is an online tender, where only e-Tender will be accepted in the National e-GP Portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted. To submit e-Tender, registration in the National e-GP Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) is required. Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP System Portal/e-GP help desk ([helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd](mailto:helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd)).

General Manager  
Planning & ICT Division  
Tel: +8802997700612  
E-mail: gm\_planning\_ict@jgtdsl.gov.bd

## Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh

Office of the Executive Engineer (RHD),

Tangail Road Division,

Call: 0921-64043

E-mail: [eetan@rhd.gov.bd](mailto:eetan@rhd.gov.bd)

Memo No:35.01.9395.474.07.001.25-1198

Date: 18-12-2025.

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Tender ID No.	Name of works/Package description	Tender Method	Last Selling & Closing date
1196176	Extra Widening by Flexible Pavement, Extra Widening by Rigid Pavement, Construction of 01 (One) Nos 44.02m (1 x 42.68m) Long P.C Girder Bridge (Kakraidi Bridge), Extention of 04 (Four) Nos Culvert & Necessary Sign-Signal of Madhupur-Mymensingh National Highway (N-401) under Tangail Road Division during the year 2025-2026 (WP-07)	OTM	18-01-2026 at 17.00 & 19-01-2026 at 12.00
1195635	Construction of RCC saucer Drain at 12th (p) km (Delduar Intersection) and Rigid Pavement at Ch. 0+000 to 0+ 0105 km of Tangail-Delduar Road (Z-4015) Under Tangail Road Division during the year 2025-2026.	OTM	28-12-2025 at 17.00 & 29-12-2025 at 12.00
1195634	Installation of Traffic Sign with Post, Reflecting Sheet on Guide Post, Reflecting Road Studs and Road Marking at Different Chainage of Joydebpur-Tangail-Jamalpur Road (N-4) Under Tangail Road Division during the year 2025-2026.	OTM	04-01-2026 at 17.00 & 05-01-2026 at 12.00

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To submit e-Tender registration in the National e-GP System Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) is required. Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP System Portal and from e-GP help desk ([helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd](mailto:helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd)) (01715-777778, 017625528-31)

3632122

(Dr Shintia Azmeri Khan)  
ID No: 602214  
Executive Engineer, RHD  
Road Division Tangail.

নোব হাসান মাহিদ চৌধুরী  
বিল-৭৩০১৬৭২  
কমান্ডান্ট (কার্যালয়)  
আরআরএফ, সিলেট  
ই-মেইল: [comrrsylhet@police.gov.bd](mailto:comrrsylhet@police.gov.bd)

GD-2783

GD-2784





## LYON ROARS on Ashes return

After an upsetting omission from the second Ashes Test in Brisbane, spinner Nathan Lyon was all smiles on Thursday as he celebrated his recall to the Australian eleven with a two-wicket burst that launched a day of pain for England at the Adelaide Oval. Introduced into the Australian attack early, Lyon struck with his third ball to have Ollie Pope caught for three. Three balls later, he bowled opener Ben Duckett for 29 with a peach of a delivery that beat the outside edge before clipping the top of off stump. England could not recover from there, hobbling to 213-8 at stumps on Day 2, trailing by 158 after Australia added 45 to their overnight 326-8. Duckett was Lyon's 564th Test scalp, moving him past pace great Glenn McGrath to sixth on the all-time list for most Test wickets. In this regard, Lyon leads the chart among active players, with teammate Mitchell Starc next at 15th on the all-time list with 420 wickets in 103 Tests.

PHOTO: REUTERS

## MOST WICKETS IN TESTS

PLAYER	MATCHES	WICKETS
Muthiah Muralidaran (SL)	133	800
Shane Warne (Aus)	145	708
James Anderson (Eng)	188	704
Anil Kumble (Ind)	132	619
Stuart Broad (Eng)	167	604
Nathan Lyon* (Aus)	141*	564

## BCB's long-overdue shift in NOC stance

ASHFAQ UL-ALAM

By general consensus, the Lord's in London is regarded as the Mecca of cricket, but in terms of significance, the Melbourne Cricket Ground (MCG) -- which hosted the first-ever Test -- isn't too far behind.

On Thursday, the MCG hosted a league-phase match of the Big Bash League (BBL) between Hobart Hurricanes and Melbourne Stars, and among the 22 cricketers on display was Bangladesh's very own Rishad Hossain.

Rishad, playing for Adelaide, claimed 2-33 in three overs as his side lost the game by eight wickets.

Despite the defeat, it was a memorable match for the leg spinner as he became only the second Bangladeshi after Shakib Al Hasan to play a T20 at the venue. Shakib has played two T20s there, but like Rishad, his appearances also came in the BBL, as Bangladesh are yet to play a T20I at the MCG.

Rishad could have had this experience last year, when he was roped in by the same side for the BBL. But at that time, the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) blocked his path by denying him a No Objection Certificate (NOC), as it clashed with the Bangladesh Premier League (BPL).

What happened with Rishad was far from an isolated incident, as for years the BCB displayed a similar reluctance when issuing NOCs for foreign leagues.

The board has recalled players from overseas leagues for insignificant series against weak sides, delayed NOC decisions until the last moment – creating unnecessary drama – and even offered financial compensation after stopping them from featuring in other leagues.

The BCB's NOC stance has denied many Bangladeshi players opportunities, arguably stagnating their development. But now, the board is seemingly on the path of course correction.



Granting Rishad full NOC for the BBL, even though it would make him entirely unavailable for the upcoming BPL, was a step in the right direction.

The board also allowed Taskin Ahmed to take part in the Abu Dhabi T10 League in November for the Northern Warriors, even though the Tigers were playing a home series against Ireland at that time.

On Thursday, the board cleared up all doubts about Mustafizur Rahman's NOC situation for next year's Indian Premier League (IPL), declaring that the pacer, who was bought for a whopping INR 9.2 crore by the Kolkata Knight Riders (KKR), will be available for all but eight days of the season, which will run from March 26 to May 31.

"He [Mustafizur] will return for eight days to play the ODI series," BCB Cricket Operations chief Nazmul Abedeen Fahim said, explaining the decision was taken with Bangladesh's 2027 ODI World Cup qualification in mind.

"We are not willing to make any compromise on our qualification for the World Cup. Since we are not in a comfortable position, this decision was taken," he added.

Mustafizur and Taskin are currently in the UAE, taking part in ILT20 for Dubai Capitals and Sharjah Warrioz respectively with partial NOCs, which will end on 24 December, two days before the start of the new BPL season.

Batter Saif Hassan too was given a partial NOC for the Abu Dhabi T10 League, as he returned for the Ireland T20Is, Bangladesh's last T20Is before the ICC T20 World Cup.

This shows that while the board is now allowing players more opportunities overseas, the national team's requirements still come first. Striking this balance will be difficult going forward, but the board's change of mindset is a positive sign, as it will allow Rishad and others to develop and showcase Bangladesh's cricketing talents on a bigger stage.



## Junior Tigers eye third straight Asia Cup final

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh will be aiming to seal a third successive final berth in the ACC Under-19 Asia Cup when they face Pakistan in the second semifinal at Sevens Stadium in Dubai today.

The junior Tigers, champions of the last two editions, are unbeaten in the competition, having won all three of their group games.

Bangladesh began their campaign with a hard-fought three-wicket victory over Afghanistan before registering comfortable wins against Nepal and Sri Lanka.

Opener Zawad Abrar has been in impressive form, scoring 215 runs in three

innings at a remarkable average of 107.50. Left arm spinner Shahriar Ahmed is Bangladesh's leading wicket-taker with seven scalps in three matches.

Pakistan, meanwhile, booked a semifinal spot as Group A runners-up. They opened their campaign with a massive 297-run win over Malaysia but suffered a crushing defeat against arch-rivals India in their second group match. Pakistan bounced back with another strong display against hosts UAE.

In the first semifinal today, Group A champions India will face Group B runners-up Sri Lanka at the ICC Academy Ground in Dubai, with the final scheduled for Sunday at the same venue.

## Local pairs power into Yonex-Sunrise quarters

SPORTS REPORTER

Riding on their strong showing at the Yonex Canadian International Challenge earlier this month, Al-Amin Jumar and Moajam Hossain Ohidul continued their impressive form to reach the quarterfinals of the men's doubles at the ongoing Yonex-Sunrise Bangladesh International Challenge yesterday.

The day also saw a surprise success as the unheralded pairing of Mashud Ahmed and Sadakat Robin Asfaq booked a place in the quarterfinals with a win over a Malaysian pair at the Shaheed Tajuddin Ahmed Indoor Stadium in Paltan, Dhaka. They had earlier received a walkover in the Round of 32 on Wednesday.

Other Bangladeshi shuttlers, however, failed to match their progress, exiting across the men's doubles, women's doubles and mixed doubles events.

Top-seeded Jumar and Ohidul came into the event buoyed by a bronze-medal finish at the Canadian International Challenge earlier this month. After receiving a bye in the round of 32, the Bangladeshi pair were tested by India's Devvart Mann and Sourbh Naim.

Jumar and Ohidul edged the opening



PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED

game 21-19 before the Indians levelled the match with a 21-17 win. The hosts then sealed the decider 21-14, despite Ohidul sustaining an injury in the final game.

"We have just entered into the quarterfinals but still long way to go," Ohidul said. "We could not play the final in Canadian International Challenge but this time we want to win gold medal in home."

"Having played together for a long time, we have a good understanding among us."

Mashud and Asfaq, who train at the Alora Shuttler Academy in Dinajpur, dropped the opening game 21-14 but showed resilience to turn the match around, winning the next two games 21-14 and 21-17 to register an unexpected victory over their higher-ranked opponents.

Elsewhere, Rahatum Nayem and Mizanur Rahman went down 2-1 to India's Swastik Matharasan and Gokul Sureshkumar in the men's doubles, while Sifat Ullah and Bristi Khatun lost 2-1 to an Indian pair in the mixed doubles.

In the women's doubles, Dalia Rahman and Mithila Bishwas were beaten 2-0 by a British pair, and Reshma Akter and Bristi Khatun suffered a 2-1 defeat to an Indian duo.

## What to WATCH

### STAR SPORTS 1

The Ashes  
Australia vs England  
3rd Test, Day 4  
Live from 5:30 am  
(Saturday)

### SONY SPORTS 5

New Zealand vs  
West Indies  
3rd Test, Day 2  
Live from 4:00 am  
(Saturday)  
U19 Asia Cup

Bangladesh vs  
Pakistan  
Live from 11:00 am  
ILT20  
Sharjah Warrioz vs  
Dubai Capitals  
Live from 8:30 pm

## SHORT CORNER

### FIFA World Cup trophy to arrive in Dhaka on Jan 14

Bangladesh fans will get a chance to witness the FIFA World Cup trophy close up front as the most coveted silverware in the world of football will make a stop in Dhaka on January 14, 2026, as part of the FIFA World Cup Trophy Tour by Coca-Cola.

### Pakistan home series next year set to be in two phases

Bangladesh's upcoming full-fledged home series against Pakistan next year is set to be held in two separate phases due to a scheduling clash with the Pakistan Super League (PSL), informed BCB cricket operations chairman Nazmul Abedeen Fahim on Thursday.

### PSG topple Flamengo to win Intercontinental Cup

PSG ended a banner year on a high as they defeated CF Flamengo 2-1 in a penalty shootout on Wednesday to win the FIFA Intercontinental Cup after a 1-1 draw in regulation. It has been an incredible 2025 for Luis Enrique's men, who won a treble in the 2024/25 season, including their first UEFA Champions League title.

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



## Jamal sees football from a different perspective

STAR SPORTS DESK

Bangladesh national football team captain Jamal Bhuyan experienced football from a different perspective during a surprise visit to Camp Abilities Bangladesh 2025 at the Riya Gope Women's Sports Complex in Dhanmondi.

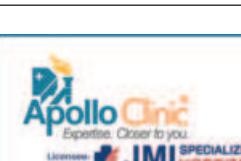
Blindfolded, the midfielder joined visually impaired children on the pitch, taking part in the game without sight and engaging directly with the campers. The visit became a key moment of the three-day inclusive sports camp, held from December 11 to 13, and reflected the camp's theme, "Sports Without Limits".

Jamal interacted with around 50 young participants and later said: "Visually impaired or people with any disabilities should be able to participate in sports and all aspects of life. They are part of the society and we should not ignore their plight to be included."

The camp was organised by Heroes for All (HFA) in collaboration with the Ministry of Youth and Sports and Assistance for Blind Children (ABC). This was the second edition of the initiative, following its first outing in January 2018. According to HFA founder and president Dr. Rehnuma Karim, the camp aimed to challenge stigma around visual impairment and provide children with a space to build confidence through sports.

The programme featured adapted versions of cricket, football, goalball and paired races, with each child paired with a counselor or volunteer to ensure one-on-one support.

The Daily Star was one of the media partners for the event.



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