



'Hadi killed out of political vengeance'

17 charged; cops say Jubo League leader Bappi mastermind; Inqilab Moncho rejects charge sheet

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Detective Branch of police yesterday submitted a charge sheet against 17 people, including prime accused Faisal Karim Masud (currently absconding), in the murder of Inqilab Moncho spokesperson Sharif Osman Bin Hadi.

The charge sheet, filed with the Dhaka Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's Court, says that the killing was masterminded by Tajjul Islam Chowdhury Bappi, 43, a former councillor of Ward-6 under Dhaka North City Corporation and organising secretary of the Jubo League's Dhaka (north) city unit.

The murder of Hadi, an MP aspirant from a Dhaka constituency, sparked widespread protests and political outrage. A frontliner of the July uprising, the 32-year-old was shot on December 12, just a day after the election schedule was announced. On December 18, he died in a Singapore hospital, where he was receiving advanced treatment. The killing raised serious concerns about the safety of candidates and the electoral environment.

Charges have been brought under Sections 120B, 302, 201, 109, and 34 of the Penal Code, carrying punishments ranging from the death penalty and life imprisonment to lesser jail terms and fines.

Additional Commissioner of Dhaka Metropolitan Police and DB chief Md Shafiqul Islam confirmed the submission of the charge sheet at a press conference at the DMP Media Centre yesterday.

Shafiqul said Hadi had launched a non-traditional political platform and delivered fierce speeches criticising the Awami League and its student wing, which angered leaders and activists of the now banned Chhatra League.

The murder, according to him, was carried out as political retaliation.

He claimed Bappi instructed Faisal, allegedly linked to Chhatra League politics, to execute the murder and arranged his escape.

"Based on the victim's political statements and the political identities of the accused, the investigation clearly

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Prime suspect Faisal, his aide Alamgir absconding

DB chief says Faisal is hiding in India

11 accused in custody, including Faisal's parents, wife, brother-in-law, and friend



With winter well underway, farmers of Kaliganj village in Rajshahi's Tanor upazila brave the biting cold to tend to their potato fields, as the season is ideal for tuber cultivation. Rajshahi yesterday recorded the lowest temperature in the country so far this winter at 7 degrees Celsius.

PHOTO: AZAHAR UDDIN

'Homes for slum dwellers, safety for all'

BNP plans its messaging for Dhaka-17

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The BNP is likely to focus on messages that ensure homes for slum dwellers and security for all in Dhaka-17, from which party acting chairman Tarique Rahman is running.

It aims to secure a large margin of victory, as Tarique, 60, takes part in the polls for the first time in his political career.

The party has identified two segments of voters in Dhaka-17: slum dwellers and the more affluent populations of Gulshan, Banani, and

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Legal loopholes allow defaulters to stay in race

MD MEHEDI HASAN

The Election Commission has scrapped the nominations of 82 parliamentary election aspirants for loan default, while 31 others will remain in the race after securing court stay orders on their default status.

Under the Representation of the People Order (RPO), a loan defaulter is not eligible to contest in the election. But a stay order from the top court enables a defaulter to enjoy the same opportunities as any other citizen until the appeal is disposed of.

One such beneficiary is an aspirant from a Narayanganj constituency.

Although he is a loan defaulter, his nomination was declared valid after the High Court, following a writ petition, issued a stay order on the Credit Information Bureau listing him as a defaulter. The order will remain effective until the appeal is disposed of.

In the same vein, another loan defaulter was able to pass his nomination from a Moulvibazar constituency.

If loan defaulters continue to receive such advantages in all areas, it will have negative consequences, especially in a national election, said experts and analysts.

"Defaulters continue to move around with extra benefits, and it is we who have enabled this. This is an ominous signal for the country."

Mustafa K Mujeri, executive director at the Institute for Inclusive Finance and Development

"This is a great misfortune," said Mustafa K Mujeri, executive director at the Institute for Inclusive Finance and Development.

In this country, loan defaulters enjoy more privileges, while good borrowers suffer.

"Defaulters continue to move around with extra benefits, and it is we who have

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NCP struggles to steady ship ahead of polls

Resignations, inactivity key reasons

SHAMIMA RITA and ARAFAT RAHAMAN

The National Citizen Party is entering its first national election amid organisational turmoil, after a wave of resignations triggered by its decision to join the Jamaat-e-Islami-led alliance left key structures weakened and leadership gaps exposed.

Formed in the wake of the student-led mass uprising and presenting itself as a new political force, the NCP now faces fragmented preparations for the February 12 polls.

Looking ahead, the party now focuses on making optimal use of the remaining time, accelerating campaign preparations, filling leadership gaps pragmatically, and contesting the election with whatever organisational strength remains.

Despite submitting nomination papers, the party remains short of election-ready structures, with crucial tasks, such as strategy-setting and manifesto drafting, either stalled or unfinished.

Over the past two weeks, at least 15 senior leaders have stepped down, including members of the election steering committee, manifesto committee, and policy and research wing.

Several others have grown inactive, further eroding the party's organisational capacity.

Grassroots leaders described the timing of the departures as a severe setback as heads and core members of multiple cells for office, media relations, publicity and ICT are inactive or no longer with the party.

They said routine party operations have become difficult, with remaining activities continuing only on a limited scale.

A senior NCP leader, speaking to The Daily Star on condition of anonymity, admitted the party was not fully prepared for the polls.

With fewer than 40 days left, he said, the focus had shifted from comprehensive planning to short-term tactical execution.

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Venezuela's Vice President Delcy Rodríguez is sworn in as interim president by National Assembly head Jorge Rodríguez in Caracas on Monday. Venezuelan lawmaker Nicolás Maduro Guerra, son of President Nicolás Maduro, assisted in the oath-taking ceremony.

PHOTO: AFP

Europe backs Greenland in face of US threat

Leaders affirm the island's autonomy; Venezuela situation remains tense

AGENCIES

Leaders from major European powers rallied behind Greenland yesterday, saying the Arctic island belongs to its people, following a renewed threat by US President Donald Trump to take over the Danish territory.

Trump has in recent days repeated that he wants to gain control of Greenland, an idea first voiced in 2019 during his first presidency, arguing it is vital for the US military, and that Denmark has

not done enough to protect it.

White House Deputy Chief of Staff Stephen Miller on Monday dismissed concerns about Danish sovereignty.

"You can talk all you want about international niceties and everything else," Miller told CNN. "But we live in a world, in the real world, that is governed by strength, that is governed by power."

A US military operation over the weekend that seized the leader of

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Machado offers to share her Nobel Peace Prize with Trump

US action in Venezuela makes world less safe: UN

Armed police deployed on Caracas streets

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Level playing field absent

Say NCP, IAB after meeting CEC

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

National Citizen Party and Islami Andolan Bangladesh yesterday told the Election Commission that a level playing field remains absent in the country ahead of the February 12 polls, citing poor law and order and preferential treatment for some political parties.

After separate meetings with Chief Election Commissioner A M M Nasir Uddin, NCP highlighted the deteriorating law-and-order situation, while IAB said some parties are receiving VVIP protocol, undermining electoral fairness.

Following a meeting between a four-member NCP delegation and the CEC at the EC headquarters, NCP spokesperson Asif Mahmud Sajib Bhuiyan described the election-time law and order situation as "very disappointing".

"Since the day after the schedule was announced, we saw a marked criminal who had recently been released on bail, kill one of our

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A delegation led by EU Ambassador Michael Miller at a meeting with BNP acting chairman Tarique Rahman at the party chairperson's Gulshan office yesterday evening.

PHOTO: BNP MEDIA CELL

Indonesia flood kills 16, displaces hundreds

AFP, Jakarta

Torrential rains battered Indonesia's Siau island, causing a flash flood that killed at least 16 people, with another three missing, authorities said yesterday.

An overflowing river flooded four towns on the small island north of Sulawesi on Monday, the national disaster mitigation agency said in a statement.

"Sixteen people have been reported dead due to the flash flood," agency spokesman Abdul Muhari said, adding that teams were searching for the three missing.

He said 22 people were injured and nearly 700 villagers displaced.

"The flash flood was triggered by heavy-intensity rain that had drenched the area since the early hours, causing the river's water flow to surge suddenly," Abdul said.

Images shared by the search and rescue agency showed big rocks and uprooted trees that were swept away.

The flood cut off access to some roads and damaged dozens of homes as well as public buildings and infrastructure, the spokesman said.

Floods are common in Indonesia during the rainy season, which typically lasts between October and March.

'Homes for slum dwellers, safety for all'

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the cantonment areas. Acknowledging the differences in their needs, the party plans to approach each group with specific messaging.

These were discussed during a meeting, chaired by Tarique, of leaders and activists of the Dhaka-17.

The meeting started at 11:00am and ended at 1:00pm at the chairperson's Gulshan office.

According to the Election Commission, the constituency has 3,33,777 voters – 174,709 male, 159,060 female, and eight transgender.

A significant proportion of the voters come from marginalised communities, with slums such as Bhashantek, Karail, and Sattala playing a crucial role in influencing the election results.

Tarique, who returned home on December 25 after 17 years in exile, registered as a voter in ward-9 of Dhaka North City Corporation.

BNP's strategy in Dhaka-17 hinges on strengthening its existing support base in these communities, with promises of improved access to housing, healthcare, education, and public services.

At the meeting, leaders emphasised

the importance of securing permanent housing for slum dwellers, particularly those who have been living in the areas for three to five years.

"A policy will be adopted by BNP to ensure permanent housing for those who have lived in settlements for three to five years. If elected, this will be implemented," said a BNP leader, wishing not to be named.

They also highlighted the party's commitment to providing better access to sports facilities, healthcare, and school grounds for slum residents.

BNP leaders believe that slum dwellers historically show high voter participation. This makes slum voters a key target group in the party's campaign strategy.

A BNP leader, who attended the meeting, said, "After the Korail slum fire in November, party leaders and activists have prioritised these areas. Despite this, the BNP's performance in slum areas has not been as strong as expected."

The leader in the meeting urged the party to refocus its efforts on slum communities to maximise its chances of success.

The main rival for the BNP in Dhaka-17 is SM Khaliduzzaman from the Jamaat-e-Islami alliance.

As part of its election campaign, BNP leaders have planned door-to-door outreach in slum areas, promising to implement welfare programmes aimed at improving their living conditions.

Party insiders believe that Tarique's direct engagement with slum communities will strengthen the BNP's connection with the urban poor, boosting support for the party.

In Gulshan and Banani, local BNP leaders raised concerns about security, pollution, and the need for stricter regulations.

Discussions also focused on selecting polling agents, who will assist voters and monitor the election process.

Leaders from different units assured Tarique of their united support in the upcoming campaign.

"Slum voters will play a pivotal role in securing Tarique Rahman's victory. Our goal is to win with a decisive margin, and slum voters are central to this strategy," said another BNP leader, seeking anonymity.

used in the crime, the charge sheet said, adding that Md Nuruzzaman Nomani, along with Sibion Dio and Sanjay Chisim, helped the accused flee through the Haluaghat border.

Another accused, Md Aminul Islam, alias Raju, was allegedly involved in the planning and assisted in the killing, while Md Faisal allegedly kept the firearm and ammunition used in the murder.

Asked about Faisal Karim Masud's whereabouts and his video messages, Shafiqul Islam said the videos were reviewed, and preliminary findings suggest they are authentic, though the forensic report is pending.

He dismissed Faisal's claim of being in Dubai, saying evidence suggests he is holed up in India.

When asked about the DB's earlier claim that two people were arrested in India, which was later denied by Indian police, the DB chief said the statement was based on their investigation.

"What we said is true, but we do not want to comment on another country's position; we stated what our investigation revealed," he said.

On December 14, Inqilab Moncho Member Secretary Abdullah Al Jaber filed an attempted murder case with Paltan Model Police Station against Faisal and several unnamed individuals, which was later upgraded to a murder case after Hadi's death.

The case was subsequently transferred to the DB.

'Hadi killed out of political vengeance'

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establishes that Sharif Osman Hadi was shot dead out of political vengeance," he said, adding that confessional statements, CCTV footage, forensic tests, and digital evidence corroborated the findings.

Meanwhile, Inqilab Moncho Member Secretary Abdullah Al Jaber dismissed the charge sheet, alleging that the killing was not the act of a single individual but part of a larger conspiracy.

"The government claims a ward councillor instructed Faisal Karim Masud to shoot Hadi. Even a madman would not believe this. The murder was carried out by a wider network, with direct involvement of the state machinery. Until those forces are brought to justice, our struggle will not stop. Any charge sheet that excludes them is unacceptable to us."

Jaber made the remarks while speaking after the "March for Justice" programme in front of the National Museum at Shahbagh last night.

Earlier at the presser, the DB chief said supplementary charge sheets would be submitted if further evidence or involvement of additional individuals emerges.

Of the accused, 11 are currently in police custody. They include prime suspect Faisal's father Humayun Kabir, 70; mother Hasi Begum, 60; wife Saheda Parveen Samia, 24; brother-in-law Wahid Ahmed Shipu, 27; and friend Maria Akter Lima, 21. The

others are Md Kabir, 33; Nuruzzaman Nomani, alias Ujjal, 34; Sibion Dio, 32; Sanjay Chisim, 23; Aminul Islam, alias Raju, 37; and Md Faisal, 25.

The six absconding accused are prime suspect Faisal Karim Masud, 37; Alamgir Hossain, 26; Tajul Islam Chowdhury Bappi, 43; Philip Snal, 32; Mukti Mahmud, 51; and Jesmin Akter, 42.

According to the charge sheet, Faisal directly carried out the shooting, while Alamgir drove the motorcycle used in the attack. Bappi planned the killing and coordinated Faisal's escape across the border, with direct assistance from Philip.

Faisal's brother-in-law Mukti Mahmud and sister Jesmin Akter sheltered him and stored weapons. His father Humayun Kabir changed the number plate of the motorcycle used in the murder, maintained the weapon, and arranged its transfer to Narsingdi, while his mother Hasi Begum provided shelter and assisted in weapon maintenance, the charge sheet added.

Faisal's wife Saheda Parveen Samia, according to the charges, sent Tk 30,000 via bKash to facilitate his escape and hid the weapon in Narsingdi with help from her brother Wahid Ahmed Shipu, who transported the murder weapon from Dhaka.

Faisal's friend Maria Akter Lima had prior knowledge of the murder plan, while Md Kabir supplied the motorcycle

NCP struggles to steady ship ahead of polls

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When contacted yesterday, Senior Joint Member Secretary Ariful Islam Adebek acknowledged the leadership crisis.

He said the party was moving to address the vacuum by forming a new election steering committee and was continuing work on its manifesto, which would be released after the seat-sharing process is finalised.

He added that the committee would be led by former adviser Asif Mahmud Shojib Bhuiyan, who recently joined the party as its spokesperson.

Minutes after the conversation with Ariful, the NCP issued a statement expanding Asif Mahmud's responsibilities.

Alongside overseeing the election process, he will now supervise multiple party cells, including media, publicity and publication, branding, office management, public relations, member recruitment, and research and policy.

He will also coordinate activities of the Dhaka North and Dhaka South units.

PARTY IN DISARRAY
Internal disruption became visible during the final phase of alliance negotiations.

Tasnim Jara, senior joint member secretary and general secretary of the election steering committee, resigned from the party.

Khaled Saifullah, head of the research and policy wing and a central figure in manifesto preparation, also stepped down.

Multiple party sources said his

departure effectively halted the manifesto committee's work, as he had played a leading role in policy design and drafting.

The committee's remaining members – Chief Coordinator Nasiruddin Patwary and Joint Convener Sarwar Tushar – are now largely occupied with their own election campaigns, leaving manifesto work nearly dormant.

Sources further said that Khaled Saifullah left with key documents related to the manifesto, complicating efforts to restart the process.

Contacted for comment, Khaled Saifullah declined to respond.

Resignations have also hollowed out several operational units. Media Cell chief Mushfiq Us Salehin, ICT Cell chief Fahad Alam Bhuiyan, Office Cell head Saleh Uddin Silat, and Farmers Wing chief coordinator Azad Khan Bhashani have all quit.

The alliance decision has also taken a visible toll on the party's female leadership. Senior Joint Convener Samantha Sharmin, after withdrawing from electoral competition, has largely disengaged from party activities.

Another senior leader, Senior Joint Member Secretary Nahida Sarwar Niva, has not formally resigned but remains inactive in both election and organisational work, party sources said.

Others who have resigned or become inactive include Nusrat Tabassum, Monira Sharmin, southern region organiser Manjila Jhuma, northern region organiser Aranya Dyuti, and at

least five more leaders.

On December 29, two days after the 11-party alliance had been announced, NCP Convener Nahid Islam named Asif Mahmud as the party's spokesperson and head of the Election Management Committee, replacing Nasiruddin Patwary.

A senior party leader said the lost time had come at a heavy cost.

Had internal disagreements been resolved and the alliance decision taken two months earlier, he said, the party could have positioned itself competitively in 20 to 25 constituencies.

In volatile electoral environments, he added, the past two months had been decisive, and largely squandered.

Looking ahead, he said the party's collective effort was now focused on making optimal use of the remaining time, accelerating campaign preparations, filling leadership gaps pragmatically, and contesting the election with whatever organisational strength remains.

The NCP emerged in late February directly from the heart of the mass uprising, led by the youth who stood at its forefront. From its inception, the party pledged to reshape Bangladesh's political order, dismantle constitutional autocracy, and build a durable democratic framework.

It was formed by members of the Jatiya Nagorik Committee and Students Against Discrimination – two platforms born of the student movement that ultimately brought down the Awami League regime.

Legal loopholes allow defaulters

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enabled this. This is an ominous signal for the country."

Loan defaulters often go to the HC without repaying their bank loans and file writ petitions that drag on for years, said Mujeri, a former chief economist of the Bangladesh Bank.

He stressed that laws must be changed and the number of money loan courts increased.

"More judges, lawyers and courtrooms are required so that financial cases can be resolved quickly. When defaulters see that even writ petitions are disposed of

within two to three months, they will no longer be able to gain undue advantages by filing them."

Political governments have not implemented these reforms for various reasons.

"We expected the interim government would do it, but it did nothing," he added.

The amended RPO under the interim government allows the Election Commission to cancel an MP's seat even after the election if it is proven that the person is a loan defaulter or has provided false information.

"We can only state who is a loan

defaulter and who is not – the authority to decide the validity of an election rests solely with the EC," said BB Spokesman Arefi Hossain Khan.

The bank can appeal against a candidate's writ petition, after which the EC will make its decision.

"But there is nothing more for us to do," said Khan, also an executive director of the BB.

For the 13th parliamentary election, 2,574 candidates submitted nominations across the country. Of them, 2,461 candidates were found to be default-free, according to BB officials.

Systematic crime, not aberrations

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The report also found no legal justification for the disappearances. International law prohibits enforced disappearances under any circumstance, including during states of emergency.

Claims that rogue officers acted alone were similarly rejected.

Victims reported consistent methods of abduction, detention, and interrogation, often in facilities near senior officials' offices, making it implausible they were unaware. The operations required careful planning and coordination among the military, police, and intelligence agencies, said the report.

The commission also found clear evidence of inter-agency communication in transferring detainees between facilities.

These were organised, state-sponsored actions, not random acts of misconduct, it said.

Evidence indicates that enforced

disappearances targeted opposition members, activists, and government critics rather than individuals involved in terrorism, the Commission said. It added that many incidents occurred during elections or periods of political unrest, suggesting political suppression rather than national security concerns as the primary motive.

The report warned that these practices have increased social instability, leaving released victims with deep psychological and emotional scars, which have been exploited by extremist groups.

MILITARY LAWS VS CIVILIAN COURTS
Some military officials have argued that allegations against military personnel should be addressed under military law rather than through civilian courts.

However, the Commission rejected this, highlighting the inadequacies of the Army Act, 1952, specifically for two reasons.

"First, the Army Act does not recognise enforced disappearance

or abduction as criminal offences, nor does it provide for superior or command responsibility. The omission is not merely technical: the Army Act is structurally incapable of addressing the gravity, systemic nature, and leadership accountability inherent in enforced disappearance," read the report.

"Second, the International Crimes (Tribunals) Act, 1973 not only recognises enforced disappearance as a crime against humanity and expressly provides for the responsibility of superiors, it also contains a non-obstante clause in Section 26, giving it overriding effect over any conflicting law."

The Commission also found that military-led investigations have failed to hold perpetrators accountable.

For example, an internal military inquiry into Brigadier Azmi's abduction was disbanded without resolution, and the evidence was destroyed, demonstrating the military's failure to ensure accountability.



A man holds a picture of ousted Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro during a rally in support of Maduro and his wife, Cilia Flores, in Caracas, yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP

showed armed men on the streets of Caracas. Tensions remained high in the capital, with shots reported overnight near the presidential palace.

Fifty-five Cuban and Venezuelan troops were killed during the US raid, according to tolls published yesterday.

Meanwhile, Maria Corina Machado, the Venezuelan opposition leader, repeatedly praised Trump on Monday

during a prime time appearance on Fox News, her first televised interview since the capture of Maduro.

She even offered him the Nobel Peace Prize she was awarded in October, a prize Trump has coveted for years. Machado also said she plans to return home "as soon as possible," and slammed the interim president Delcy Rodriguez in Caracas.



Need joint research to explore marine resources

Says Prof Yunus

UNB, Dhaka

Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus yesterday stressed the need for coordinated joint research with Japan, Indonesia and the Maldives to explore marine resources, mentioning that Bangladesh has a maritime area almost equal to its landmass.

"The problems need to be identified. Research must be coordinated with those who have expertise in this area. Through such efforts, new horizons of the economy will open," he said.

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The Dayaganj-Jurain Road has been in a neglected state for a long time after Bangladesh Railway built a boundary wall along the rail line, significantly narrowing the road. Due to reduced width and severe deterioration, the road has become a struggle for commuters.

PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED

DAYAGANJ-JURAIN ROAD

Once a vital route, now a corridor of chaos

HELEMUL ALAM

Once a bustling thoroughfare just four to five years ago, the road stretching from the Dayaganj crossing to Jurain Railgate has now turned into a neglected and damaged route after Bangladesh Railway built a boundary wall along the rail line, significantly narrowing the road.

The road was once used by vehicles from both directions and even had a divider to ensure smooth traffic flow. Although the divider still exists, the western portion of the road has remained abandoned for the last five years.

This vital link between Dayaganj and Jurain, used by vehicles heading toward the southern region through the Postogola Bridge, has now become a corridor of chaos due to reduced width and severe deterioration.

During a recent visit, large sections of the road were found heavily damaged. The narrowed western side, left unusable following the railway demarcation and wall construction, has turned into a dumping ground for garbage and an informal parking zone for trucks, human hauliers, and rickshaws.

Makeshift shanties have also sprung up along the roadside.

Mohammad Al Amin, a resident of Pipe Rasta in Mirhazirbagh, said, "This problem has been going on for a long time. Ever since they built the boundary wall along the railway line, half of this road has become unusable."

"Since then, there has been no development work here. Later, some work started on the other side, and because of that, this road got even worse. Now only a small portion is usable, and no repair work is being done there either," he added.

Abdul Al Amin, another resident, said the main stretch is riddled with potholes and becomes submerged during rain.

"This road -- from Jurain to Dayaganj -- is extremely important

traffic pressure on other routes," he added.

Residents said while the section near the station remains somewhat functional, the rest of the stretch is broken in places and riddled with potholes.

Mohammad Jony, a resident of Jurain, said, "It used to be a two-way road. Now it is narrow and risky. Auto-rickshaws frequently overturn here."

Contacted, Dhaka South City Corporation Chief Engineer



because thousands of people use it to travel to Gulistan and Tejgaon for work. Now, because of its damaged condition, many vehicles, especially rickshaws, overturn frequently," he said.

"Before the elevated expressway was built on the other side, all the large buses from the southern districts used this Dayaganj road as their main route. If it is repaired and developed again, it could ease

Fakir said the area falls under the railway's jurisdiction, and only one side of the road is currently available for use.

"It is not possible to make it two-way. The existing part is being used as a two-way road. On the abandoned side, no vehicles run because its width varies. In some approach areas, it is only five to six feet wide," he said.

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TOFAZZAL MURDER

PBI charges 28 DU students

COURT CORRESPONDENT

The Police Bureau of Investigation has charged 28 students of Dhaka University in connection with the killing of 35-year-old Tofazzal Hossain at its Fazlul Haque Muslim Hall in September 2024.

Investigation Officer Md Hannanul Islam, an additional SP of PBI, on December 17 last year submitted a supplementary charge sheet of the murder case before the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's Court of Dhaka.

Of the 28 accused, Jalal Mia, Ahsan Ullah alias Bipul Sheikh, Al Hossain Sazzad, Mottakin Sakin Shah, Md Sumon Mia, and Wajibul Alam gave confessional statements after their arrest.

The remaining 22 accused are Firoz Kabir, Abdus Samad, Sakib Raihan, Yeasin Ali Gain, Yamuzzaman Yam, Fazle Rabbi, Shahriar Kabir Shovon, Mehedi Hasan Imran, Ratul Hasan, Sultan Mia, Nasir Uddin, Mobasser Billah, Shishir Ahmed, Mohosin Uddin Shafi, Abdullahil Kafi, Sheikh Ramzan Ali Raky, Rashed Kamal Anik, Moniruzzaman Sohag, Abu Raihan, Redwanur Rahman Parvez, Rabbikul Riad and Ashraf Ali Munshi. All of them are absconding.

Among the arrested

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PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

JUSTICE FOR HADI

Inqilab Moncho takes out truck procession

DU CORRESPONDENT

Inqilab Moncho yesterday held a truck-mounted protest march at several locations in Dhaka to build public support for its demand for justice over the killing of its spokesperson Sharif Osman Bin Hadi.

The platform has been campaigning since Saturday after announcing a four-point demand.

Yesterday, it organised rallies at least nine key points in the capital using 10 truck vans.

The march began around 11:30am from Shahbagh and passed through Science Lab, City College, Mohammadpur, Mirpur-10, Uttara, Bashundhara, Badda, Rampura and Jatrabari, before concluding in front of the National Museum in the evening.

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'No shortage in LPG supply'

Says energy adviser

BSS, Dhaka

Power and Energy Adviser Fozul Kabir Khan yesterday ruled out any supply shortage behind the recent alleged disruption in liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) cylinder availability.

"About 98 percent of the LPG business in Bangladesh is controlled by the private sector.

Government involvement is limited to around two percent," he said after attending a meeting of the Advisers Council Committee on Government Purchase held at the Secretariat.

The adviser said the abnormal price hike and temporary scarcity were the result of "collusion and deliberate manoeuvring" by wholesalers and retailers, not a failure in imports or production.

The adviser assured consumers that the government would continue to monitor the situation closely and take all necessary steps to prevent further manipulation of the LPG market.

The adviser said LPG imports have increased compared to the previous month, making any genuine supply shortage unlikely.

"From the import side, there is no reason for a crisis," he said, noting that some operators withheld supply in anticipation of higher prices following

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STUDENT UNION POLLS

JnU voting ends amid allegations of irregularities

Counting faces delay over technical issues

RAKIB MADBER

Voter turnout in the Jagannath University Central Students' Union (JnUCSU) election stood at around 65 percent, while turnout in the hall union elections was 77 percent.

Election Commissioner Prof Zulfiker Mahmud disclosed the figures around 6:00pm yesterday and said vote counting would begin shortly. However, counting remained suspended for a long time due to technical problems with the vote-counting machines.

Later, following discussions between the election commission and all stakeholders -- including representatives of all panels and independent vice-president and general secretary candidates -- a decision was taken to proceed with machine-based vote counting. Election Commissioner Prof Kaniz Fatema Kakoli announced the decision at around 11:30pm.

Vote counting began shortly afterwards and was underway at the time of filing this report around 1:00am.

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VOTER TURNOUT

Central Union 65%

Hall Unions 77%

TOTAL VOTERS

16,649

TOTAL CANDIDATES

Central Posts 190

candidates for 21 posts

Hall Union Posts 33

candidates for 13 posts

VOTING LOCATIONS

178 booths, 39 centres

(38 departments, 1 hall)

FIZZ IPL SNUB, AFTERMATH

'Serves interest of neither country'

Finance adviser says it won't impact Dhaka-Delhi ties

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Finance Adviser Salehuddin Ahmed yesterday said the exclusion of Bangladeshi pacer Mustafizur Rahman from the Indian Premier League (IPL) has moved into the "political realm", terming the development "unfortunate".

He added that the sequence of events surrounding the cricketer did not originate from the Bangladesh side and expressed regret over the situation, stating it serves the interests of neither country.

The adviser made the remarks while responding to questions from reporters following a meeting of the Advisers' Council Committee on Government Purchase at the Secretariat.

When asked about the potential impact on Bangladesh-India relations and the economy, with the addition of the ban on IPL broadcasts in Bangladesh, the adviser said, "There has been no impact here. Not a single word regarding sports was uttered during the purchase committee meeting."

Responding to a query on whether this would affect future bilateral trade, he said, "I don't see it from that perspective. The decisions we are taking for the economy

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4



A month-long flower festival is set to begin at DC Park in Faujdarhat of Chattogram, where the park has been adorned with vibrant decorations and 140 species of local and foreign flowers. The festival will be open to visitors daily from 10:00am to 8:00pm between January 9 and February 8. The photo was taken recently.

PHOTO: RAJIB RAIHAN

Man dies in BSF custody

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

A Bangladeshi man has died after being detained by the Border Security Force (BSF) upon entering India through the Johorpurtek border in Chapainawabganj.

The deceased was identified as Robiul Islam, 35, of Satrashia village in Narayanpur union of Chapainawabganj Sadar upazila.

After his body was handed over at the Johorpurtek border by the BSF yesterday, Robiul's postmortem was conducted in the Chapainawabganj District Hospital and his body was handed over to his family, said Kazi Mostafizur Rahman, commanding officer of the Border Guard Bangladesh's 53rd battalion.

Robiul was detained on Sunday at dawn while he was wearing "only shorts and his body was wet", Mostafizur said quoting BSF.

After being taken to a
SEE PAGE 4 COL 5

15% of looted firearms still unrecovered

Says EC Sanaullah

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Around 15 percent of weapons and 25 percent of ammunition looted from law enforcement agencies remain unrecovered, Election Commissioner Brig Gen (ret'd) Abul Fazel Md Sanaullah said yesterday.

Drawing on past experience, he said arms circulation tends to increase during elections, strengthening the influence of criminal groups.

Following the July uprising, about 85 percent of looted firearms and 75 percent of ammunition were recovered, but the rest are still unaccounted for, he added.

"We must identify those who took these weapons and recover them. Creating such an environment will help restore public confidence," he said.

The commissioner made the remarks while addressing a meeting of the Law Enforcing Cell at the Circuit House in Chattogram.

Referring to his recent visit to Cox's Bazar, Sanaullah said the Rohingya camps and border areas would be sealed during the election, allowing only essential transportation.

"These measures will be implemented ahead of the election," he said.

Over 15 lakh register for postal voting

UNB, Dhaka

More than 15 lakh people have registered to vote through the postal balloting in the upcoming national election and referendum.

"A total of 15,33,683 voters completed the registration process (with Postal Vote BD app) to vote through the postal ballots," said Director (Public Relations) of the Election Commission Secretariat Ruhul Amin Mollik yesterday.

The deadline for the postal vote registration expired at 12:00am on Monday.

Among the registrants, a total of 7,61,140 voters are from Bangladesh, as the government staff posted outside their respective constituencies, the polling personnel and the prisoners are allowed to vote through the postal ballots this year.

Mymensingh struggles with waste management

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Mymensingh

Waste management and disposal remain a lingering concern for Mymensingh City Corporation (MCC) for years, despite repeated calls from civic bodies and residents to address the problem.

For around 30 years, the city's garbage -- including raw waste from markets and toxic medical waste from about 250 hospitals, clinics and diagnostic centres -- has been dumped in the open at Moilakanda in the Char Kalibari area, causing severe pollution.

Dr Md Zakiul Islam, deputy director of Mymensingh Medical College Hospital, said the hospital has no waste treatment plant. As a result, waste is stored in a shed and later collected by MCC dump trucks every evening.

Md Saiful Islam, deputy director of the Department of Environment in Mymensingh, said many hospitals and clinics have been ignoring instructions on sorting and disposing of medical waste.

Meanwhile, the dumping site at Moilakanda has become a serious nuisance for locals.

Although part of the site is enclosed by a boundary wall, the rest remains open, allowing garbage to spread to adjacent areas, including croplands, particularly during the monsoon.

"Due to waste seeping in from the dumping site, we have been facing difficulties cultivating our croplands and suffering losses for years," said Sharif Mia, 50, a local farmer.

Mazeda Khatun, another resident, said



stench from the dumping site pollutes the air, while flies and mosquitoes persist year-round.

Mohabbat Ali, conservation inspector of MCC, said around 500 tonnes of waste, including five tonnes of medical waste, are generated in the city daily.

As MCC has no experts to manage toxic medical waste, these are disposed of using traditional methods, he added.

He also said there is no separate system for collecting medical waste, meaning all types of waste are transported together by the same trucks to the Moilakanda dumping station.

Nobo Waste Management Service Ltd, a private organisation, collects medical waste from about 40 private hospitals and diagnostic centres under contractual arrangements.

Owners of other private facilities send their waste to MMCH's garbage shed, from where it is transported to Moilakanda, Ali said.

He said MCC contacted Prism Bangladesh Ltd, a private enterprise, in 2022 to treat waste using an effluent treatment plant and recycle plastic waste, but the work has yet to begin.

The enterprise has already set up a plant and is at the final stage of starting operations, he said.

Abul Hasnat Epu, managing director of Nobo Waste, said with MCC's support, the organisation has been collecting medical waste and dumping it at the city's Akua area since 2019.

"We collect medical waste in separate bins according to type and transport it to the dumping station in a covered van," he said.

Incepta Pharmaceuticals Limited

40, Shahid Tajuddin Ahmed Sarani, Tejgaon Industrial Area
Dhaka-1208, Bangladesh (the "Company")

NOTICE OF CREDITORS MEETING

Notice is hereby given that, pursuant to an Order dated 2nd December, 2025 passed in the Company Matter No. 2163 of 2025 of the Hon'ble High Court Division of the Supreme Court of Bangladesh, comprising of Mr. Justice Ahmed Sohel, a creditors' meeting of all the creditors of the Company will be held on 22nd January, 2026 at 02.00 p.m. at 40, Shahid Tajuddin Ahmed Sarani, Tejgaon Industrial Area, Dhaka-1208, Bangladesh, to transact the following business:

"To consider the approval, with or without modification, of the Scheme of Amalgamation for the amalgamation of Incepta Pharmaceuticals Limited ("Transferee-Petitioner") with Incepta Vaccine Limited, Incepta Chemicals Limited, Incepta Herbal & Nutricare Limited, Incepta Hygiene and Hospicare Limited and Transuniverse Distribution Limited (collectively the "Transferor-Petitioners"), under Section 228 read with Section 229 of the Companies Act, 1994, whereby the entire undertaking of the Transferor-Petitioners as a going concern is proposed to be transferred and vested in the Transferee-Petitioner, with the Transferee-Petitioner being the surviving entity."

All creditors of the Company are requested to attend the said meeting either in person or through a duly appointed person by an authorization letter.

A copy of the Scheme of Amalgamation may be collected from the undersigned.

Sd.

Managing Director

No shortage in LPG

FROM PAGE 3

BERC's recent adjustment. He said the recent increase in LPG prices -- by more than Tk 50 per cylinder -- encouraged certain market players to take advantage of consumers.

"This abnormal price hike has been carried out through collusion. It is not a natural market movement," he added.

To address the situation,

he said the government has initiated enforcement measures across the country. Mobile courts have been deployed at the district level to prevent hoarding, forced shutdowns, and artificial supply disruptions.

The adviser said the cabinet secretary had directed district administrations to take firm action in this regard.

Serves interest

FROM PAGE 3

and our procurement are based on logical grounds; this will not affect those areas.

"The beginning was not from Bangladesh. Mustafizur is a fine, world-famous cricketer. Those who picked him did so after a thorough evaluation; they didn't take him out of charity. It is very unfortunate that they would suddenly stop [his participation]."

Salehuddin said sports should ideally remain separate from political friction. "Even during Hitler's time, the Olympics took place. Even those who hated Hitler attended. I think what happened here was driven by emotion. If both sides reconsider, a solution can be reached."

Echoing similar views, Energy Adviser Fouzul Kabir Khan said the government's stance was proportionate and justified, describing it as a natural reaction to the initial action taken by the other side.

"There are always an action and a reaction. We've to be careful so that no one goes overboard. When a Bangladeshi player is called and then suddenly withdrawn, a response is expected. I believe the response was proper,

robust, and appropriate." He added that Bangladesh's position on issues such as IPL broadcasting and the discussion around venue changes for upcoming international tournaments sent a clear but measured signal.

"This response is not only justified but also makes the other side reflect," the energy adviser said, adding that voices within India itself have expressed concern over politicising sports.

"We hope that good sense will prevail from the side where this issue originated. Cricket should continue, and so should our economic and trade relations," he added.

Man dies

FROM PAGE 3

BSF camp, he was provided with clothes and food. He reportedly developed convulsions and was taken to a hospital, where doctors declared him dead, BSF told BGB.

Based on information from BSF, Robiul's death is suspected to be from illness; the postmortem report would determine the exact cause of death, Mostafizur said.

Robiul's body bore some injuries, which might have been from baton blows.

"After receiving the written postmortem report, we will lodge a formal written protest with the BSF," he added.

পুট বিক্রয়
উত্তরা ১৬/আই নং সেক্টরে
৬০ ফুট রাস্তার পাশে, পূর্বমুখী
৩ (তিন) কাঠার পুট বিক্রয়
হবে। যোগাযোগ করুন:
০১৭১১৩০৫৭২, ০১৭১৫৩০১০৫২

PUBLIC NOTICE

TOSHIBA ASIA PACIFIC PTE. LTD. LIAISON OFFICE

Date: 07 January, 2026

We would like to inform you that TOSHIBA ASIA PACIFIC PTE. LTD. is currently undergoing a business restructuring process and will discontinue its operations through its existing liaison office in Bangladesh. The closing of the liaison office will be effective from 07 April, 2026.

All persons, with any and all outstanding claims against the liaison office of TOSHIBA ASIA PACIFIC PTE. LTD. in Bangladesh, are requested to communicate with us, in relation to the same, within 07 April 2026, for the full and final settlement of all outstanding claims and dues.

TOSHIBA ASIA PACIFIC PTE. LTD. is committed to the region and continues its operations through the Bangladesh liaison office. We sincerely apologize for any inconvenience caused due to the closure and appreciate your co-operation and support.

Contact info:

Address: 13 Floor, Crystal Palace, SE(D) 22, Road-140, Gulshan-1, Gulshan South Avenue, Dhaka-1212, Bangladesh
Phone: (8802) 2222 86092 / (8802) 2222 86089
Email: hiroumi.mitsumoto@toshiba-india.com / abdul_kader@tasia.toshiba.co.jp

Incepta Chemicals Limited

40, Shahid Tajuddin Ahmed Sarani, Tejgaon Industrial Area
Dhaka-1208, Bangladesh (the "Company")

NOTICE OF EXTRA-ORDINARY GENERAL MEETING

NOTICE OF EXTRA-ORDINARY GENERAL MEETING OF THE SHAREHOLDERS AND MEMBERS OF INCEPTA CHEMICALS LIMITED ("THE COMPANY")

This notice is hereby given to all the shareholders and members of the Company in accordance with the direction of the Company Bench of the Hon'ble High Court Division of the Supreme Court of Bangladesh, comprising His Lordship, Mr. Justice Ahmed Sohel, Hon'ble Justice of the High Court Division, by an order dated 02.12.2025 passed in the Company Matter No. 2163 of 2025, an Extra-Ordinary General Meeting of the shareholders and members of the Company will be held on 22.01.2026 at 10.00 a.m. at 40, Shahid Tajuddin Ahmed Sarani, Tejgaon Industrial Area, Dhaka-1208, Bangladesh to consider the following agenda and accordingly pass a special resolution:

"To consider and approve, with or without modification, the Scheme of Amalgamation for the amalgamation of Incepta Vaccine Limited, Incepta Chemicals Limited, Incepta Herbal & Nutricare Limited, Incepta Hygiene and Hospicare Limited and Transuniverse Distribution Limited (collectively the "Transferor Companies") with Incepta Pharmaceuticals Limited ("Transferee Company") under Section 228 read with Section 229 of the Companies Act, 1994, whereby the entire undertaking of the Transferor Companies as a going concern is proposed to be transferred and vested in the Transferee Company, with the Transferee Company being the surviving entity."

The shareholders and members of the Company are requested to attend the meeting on the date, time, and at the place mentioned above.

A copy of the Scheme of Amalgamation may be collected from the undersigned.

Sd.

Managing Director

Incepta Herbal & Nutricare Limited

40, Shahid Tajuddin Ahmed Sarani, Tejgaon Industrial Area
Dhaka-1208, Bangladesh (the "Company")

NOTICE OF EXTRA-ORDINARY GENERAL MEETING

NOTICE OF EXTRA-ORDINARY GENERAL MEETING OF THE SHAREHOLDERS AND MEMBERS OF INCEPTA HERBAL & NUTRICARE LIMITED ("THE COMPANY")

This notice is hereby given to all the shareholders and members of the Company in accordance with the direction of the Company Bench of the Hon'ble High Court Division of the Supreme Court of Bangladesh, comprising His Lordship, Mr. Justice Ahmed Sohel, Hon'ble Justice of the High Court Division, by an order dated 02.12.2025 passed in the Company Matter No. 2163 of 2025, an Extra-Ordinary General Meeting of the shareholders and members of the Company will be held on 22.01.2026 at 10.00 a.m. at 40, Shahid Tajuddin Ahmed Sarani, Tejgaon Industrial Area, Dhaka-1208, Bangladesh to consider the following agenda and accordingly pass a special resolution:

"To consider and approve, with or without modification, the Scheme of Amalgamation for the amalgamation of Incepta Vaccine Limited, Incepta Chemicals Limited, Incepta Herbal & Nutricare Limited, Incepta Hygiene and Hospicare Limited and Transuniverse Distribution Limited (collectively the "Transferor Companies") with Incepta Pharmaceuticals Limited ("Transferee Company") under Section 228 read with Section 229 of the Companies Act, 1994, whereby the entire undertaking of the Transferor Companies as a going concern is proposed to be transferred and vested in the Transferee Company, with the Transferee Company being the surviving entity."

The shareholders and members of the Company are requested to attend the meeting on the date, time, and at the place mentioned above.

A copy of the Scheme of Amalgamation may be collected from the undersigned.

Sd.

Managing Director

Iranian security forces use tear gas on protesters

AFP, Paris

Iranian security forces yesterday fired tear gas to disperse protesters at the Tehran bazaar who were chanting slogans against the clerical authorities, according to rights groups and images posted on social media.

The Islamic republic is facing its most serious wave of protests since the 2022-2023 nationwide rallies sparked by the death in custody of Mahsa Amini, who had been arrested for allegedly violating the strict dress code for women.

The current protests were triggered by anger over the rising cost of living, and began on December 28 with a shutdown by merchants in the Tehran bazaar, a national economic hub. They have since spread to other areas, especially the west, which is home to Kurdish and Lor minority groups.

Iran's Fars news agency said "sporadic gatherings" took place around the bazaar, with police dispersing the protest and demonstrators scattering into the alleyways nearby.

Fars said parts of the bazaar, including the gold market, had been closed from noon in a "protest against rising foreign exchange rates and price instability".



People gather at the site of a building destroyed by an Israeli strike in the industrial area of Ghazieh, near the coastal city of Sidon in southern Lebanon, on Monday. PHOTO: AFP

Cambodia breaks truce with cross-border fire: Thailand

AFP, Bangkok

Thailand accused Cambodia of violating a 10-day-old truce yesterday, saying cross-border mortar fire wounded a soldier, while Phnom Penh said a "pile of garbage" exploded, injuring two of its own troops.

The Thai military said it warned Cambodian forces to exercise caution, stressing if a similar incident occurred, Thailand may need to retaliate.

A decades-old border dispute between the Southeast Asian nations erupted into military clashes several times last year, with fighting in December killing dozens of people and displacing around one million on both sides.

The two countries agreed a fragile truce on December 27, ending three weeks of clashes.

"Cambodia has violated the ceasefire" yesterday morning, the Thai army said in a statement, accusing Cambodian forces of firing mortar rounds into Thailand's Ubon Ratchathani province.

One Thai soldier was hospitalised due to non-life-threatening shrapnel wounds to his right arm, the army said. The Thai army said in a separate statement that the Cambodian side had contacted a Thai military unit and claimed "there was no intention to fire into Thai territory".

HIP FRACTURE Mahathir, 100, in hospital

AFP, Kuala Lumpur



Malaysia's 100-year-old former prime minister Mahathir Mohamad is being treated for a hip fracture after falling at his residence yesterday, an aide said.

Mahathir has suffered health problems in recent years and was previously hospitalised for fatigue after a picnic celebration for his centenary in July. He was taken conscious by ambulance to the National Heart Institute in Kuala Lumpur earlier yesterday after the fall.

Military remains loyal after Maduro ouster

Say Venezuelan exiles; nearly 200 US troops entered Caracas to seize Maduro: Pentagon chief

AFP, Colombia

Real change has not come to Venezuela despite Maduro's ouster as president and the armed forces remain loyal to the regime: that was the blunt assessment Monday of former security operatives living in exile.

Last weekend, from the Colombian-Venezuelan border, Williams Cancino watched the spectacular US snatch-and-grab of his ex-boss and president.

He hoped it could be the beginning of freedom for Venezuela, after a quarter century of repression, economic depression



and one-party rule.

But if things are to really change, first "a new high command is needed" in the country's powerful security services, he told AFP on Monday.

"The top brass are totally loyal to

the regime," said Cancino, who until his defection in 2019 was an officer in Venezuela's police and the Special Action Forces, which are often used to crack down on dissent.

Through flawed elections and mass protests, they helped Maduro's government to survive.

Meanwhile, Pentagon chief Pete Hegseth said on Monday that close to 200 military personnel entered Caracas. "Nearly 200 of our greatest Americans went downtown in Caracas... and grabbed an indicted individual wanted by American justice, in support of law enforcement, without a single American killed," Hegseth said.

OCCUPIED WEST BANK Israel to introduce electronic tagging

AFP, Jerusalem

The Israeli army said Monday it was introducing a new technological system to enforce movement restrictions in the occupied West Bank for both Israelis and Palestinians, in a move Israeli media said aims to rein in surging settler violence.

The decision allows security forces "to install a technological monitoring device on individuals subject to an administrative order restricting their movement within the (West Bank)," the army said. The system would allow for monitoring of "violations of these restriction orders accordingly," it added.

The measure was adopted after a request by head of the domestic Shin Bet security agency.

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

No. 27.00.0000.043.07.042.25 Date: 06.01.2026

e-Tender Notice

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

| SL No. | Tender ID | Description | Tender Publish Date | Tender Closing Date |
|--------|----------------|----------------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| 1. | 1205862, GR-15 | Procurement of Consumables | 06.01.2026 | 21.01.2026 |

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

Size: DG-1315/7025(3x4)

MD. Abubakker Siddique
Senior Assistant Secretary
Power Division
Ph: 02223390024
E-mail: admin-3@pd.gov.bd

Dhaka South City Corporation
Office of the Chief Store & Purchase Officer
Store & Purchase Department, Nagar Bhaban, Dhaka.

Memo No.: 46.207.007.17.02.2025-279 Date: 06-Jan-2026

e-Tender Notice (OTM)

This is to notify for all concerns that e-Tenders are invited and published on 06 January 2026 in the National e-GP System Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) for the procurement of works for the following Tenders. Interested persons/firms can see details by visiting the website www.eprocure.gov.bd.

| SL. No. | Method of tender & Tender ID, Ref. No. | Procurement Item Descriptions. | Publishing Date & Time | Last Selling Date & Time | Closing & Opening Date & Time |
|---------|--|--|------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1. | OTM (NCT) Tender ID: 1207738 Ref.46.207.007.17.01.2025-73 | Supply of pesticide aduictide (Deltamethrin 0.01% W/W) (Ready for Use) for use in mosquito eradication program of Dhaka South City Corporation in the financial year 2025-2026. | 06-Jan-2026 17:00 | 27-Jan-2026 17:00 | 28-Jan-2026 14:00 |
| 2. | OTM (NCT) Tender ID: 1207360 Ref.46.207.007.17.01.2025-83 | Supply of Anti-infective disinfectant (hospital concentrate) for use in waste management work of Dhaka South City Corporation on the occasion of upcoming Holy Eid-ul-Azha in 2025-2026. | 06-Jan-2026 17:00 | 18-Jan-2026 17:00 | 19-Jan-2026 14:00 |
| 3. | OTM (NCT) Tender ID: 1196332 Ref.46.207.007.17.01.2025-53 | Supply of various types of goods (Under framework agreement) for various departments of Dhaka South City Corporation in the financial year 2025-2026. | 06-Jan-2026 17:00 | 18-Jan-2026 17:00 | 19-Jan-2026 14:00 |
| 4. | OTM (NCT) Tender ID : 1207184 Re-Tendered ID: 1164332 Ref.46.207.007.17.01.2025-42 | Supply of welding rod for use in the workshop of Engineering Department (Mechanical) of Dhaka South City Corporation in the financial year 2025-2026. | 06-Jan-2026 17:00 | 13-Jan-2026 17:00 | 14-Jan-2026 14:00 |

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. Further information and guidelines are available in the national e-GP system portal.

Md. Joynul Abedin
(Deputy Secretary)
Chief Store & Purchase Officer
Store & Purchase Department,
Dhaka South City Corporation
E-mail: cpdsdsc20@gmail.com

বাংলাদেশ ব্যাংক
(সেন্ট্রাল ব্যাংক অব বাংলাদেশ)
প্রধান কার্যালয়
মতিঝিল, ঢাকা-১০০০, বাংলাদেশ
www.erecruitment.bb.org.bd

বিজ্ঞপ্তি নং: ০১/২০২৬ তারিখ: ২১ পৌষ ১৪৩২
০৫ জানুয়ারি ২০২৬

বাংলাদেশ ব্যাংক 'সহকারী পরিচালক (এস্স ক্যাডার-আইন)' পদে নিয়োগের লক্ষ্যে লিখিত পরীক্ষায় উত্তীর্ণ প্রার্থীদের ফলাফল এবং মৌখিক পরীক্ষা গ্রহণের সময়সূচি সংক্রান্ত বিজ্ঞপ্তি

বাংলাদেশ ব্যাংক সহকারী পরিচালক (এস্স ক্যাডার-আইন) পদে নিয়োগের নিমিত্ত ০৩/১২/২০২৩ তারিখে প্রকাশিত নিয়োগ বিজ্ঞপ্তি নং-৭১/২০২৩ এর সূত্রে ১৬/০৫/২০২৫ তারিখে অনুষ্ঠিত লিখিত পরীক্ষায় উত্তীর্ণ নিম্নলিখিত রোল নম্বরধারী ৭৩ জন প্রার্থীর মৌখিক পরীক্ষা বাংলাদেশ ব্যাংক প্রধান কার্যালয়ের মূল ভবনের ৪র্থ তলায় নিম্নরূপ সময়সূচি অনুযায়ী অনুষ্ঠিত হবেঃ

| লিখিত পরীক্ষায় উত্তীর্ণ প্রার্থীদের রোল নম্বর | মৌখিক পরীক্ষার সময়সূচি |
|---|--|
| 200033, 200043, 200053, 200074, 200081, 200139, 200143, 200159, 200173, 200184, 200196, 200207, 200211, 200221 এবং 200238 = ১৫ জন | ১৮/০১/২০২৬ রবিবার) সকাল ০৮:০০টা |
| 200275, 200317, 200322, 200385, 200386, 200423, 200522, 200537, 200563, 200583, 200600, 200720, 200721, 200761 এবং 200770 = ১৫ জন | ১৯/০১/২০২৬ (সোমবার) সকাল ০৮:০০টা |
| 200774, 200796, 200799, 200804, 200824, 200847, 200853, 200895, 200899, 200926, 200936, 200954, 200958, 200960 এবং 200985 = ১৫ জন | ২০/০১/২০২৬ (মঙ্গলবার) সকাল ০৮:০০টা |
| 200993, 201032, 201057, 201064, 201065, 201088, 201090, 201104, 201112, 201131, 201132, 201145, 201146, 201178 এবং 201184 = ১৫ জন | ২১/০১/২০২৬ (বুধবার) সকাল ০৮:০০টা |
| 201205, 201239, 201250, 201266, 201297, 201299, 201393, 201433, 201457, 201462, 201471, 201490 এবং 201500 = ১৩ জন | ২২/০১/২০২৬ (বৃহস্পতিবার) সকাল ০৮:০০টা |

- মৌখিক পরীক্ষার জন্য পৃথকভাবে কোনো ইন্টারভিউ কার্ড ইস্যু করা হবে না; লিখিত পরীক্ষার প্রবেশপত্রই মৌখিক পরীক্ষার ইন্টারভিউ কার্ড হিসেবে গণ্য হবে।
- মৌখিক পরীক্ষার জন্য নির্ধারিত সময়ে প্রার্থীদের অবশ্যই রিপোর্ট করতে হবে। বিলম্বে হাজির হওয়ার কোনো কারণ কর্তৃপক্ষের নিকট গ্রহণযোগ্য বিবেচিত হবে না। নিয়োগ বিজ্ঞপ্তির শর্তাদি এবং প্রার্থীদের অনলাইন আবেদনে প্রদত্ত তথ্যাদির সমর্থনে প্রমাণক দলিলাদির মূলকপি প্রদর্শন এবং ০১ সেট সত্যায়িত ফটোকপি নিম্নবর্ণিত ক্রমানুসারে সাজিয়ে ঢেকিং বোর্ডে জমা দিতে হবেঃ
 - দলিলাদি দাখিলের নিমিত্ত পরিচালক (এইচআরডি-১), হিউমান রিসোর্সেস ডিপার্টমেন্ট-১, বাংলাদেশ ব্যাংক, প্রধান কার্যালয়, ঢাকা বরাবর স্বহস্তে লিখিত আবেদনপত্রঃ
 - লিখিত পরীক্ষার প্রবেশপত্রঃ
 - শিক্ষাগত যোগ্যতার সকল সনদপত্র এবং মার্কশিট/ট্রান্সক্রিপ্টঃ
 - ০১/১২/২০২৩ তারিখের পরে ইস্যুকৃত সনদপত্র/মার্কশিট/ট্রান্সক্রিপ্ট-এ ফল প্রকাশের তারিখ উল্লেখ না থাকলে পরীক্ষা নিয়ন্ত্রক বা রেজিস্ট্রার এর কার্যালয় হতে ইস্যুকৃত ফল প্রকাশের তারিখ সংক্রান্ত প্রত্যয়নপত্রঃ উল্লেখ্য, 'O' Level/ 'A' Level পরীক্ষায় উত্তীর্ণ হলে অথবা বিদেশী বিশ্ববিদ্যালয় হতে ডিগ্রী প্রাপ্ত হলে সরকার কর্তৃক জারীকৃত নির্দেশনা অনুযায়ী দেশীয় সংশ্লিষ্ট শিক্ষাবোর্ড/বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়/বিশ্ববিদ্যালয় মঞ্জুরী কমিশন হতে শ্রেণি/বিভাগ/জিপিএ/সি/জিপিএ উল্লেখসহ ইস্যুকৃত সমমান সনদঃ
 - আবেদনে প্রদত্ত স্থায়ী ঠিকানার সম্বন্ধে সংশ্লিষ্ট ইউনিয়ন পরিষদের চেয়ারম্যান/পৌরসভার মেয়র/কাউন্সিলর কর্তৃক সম্প্রতি ইস্যুকৃত জাতীয়তা সনদপত্র/নাগরিকত্ব সনদপত্রঃ
 - বিবাহিত প্রার্থীদের ক্ষেত্রে স্বামী-স্ত্রী উভয়ের জাতীয় পরিচয়পত্র তথা NIDঃ
 - মুক্তিযোদ্ধার সন্তানের ক্ষেত্রে নিম্নবর্ণিত দলিলাদির কপিঃ
 - লাল মুক্তিবর্তা/ ভারতীয় তালিকা/ গেজেট/ বাহিনী গেজেট/ শহীদ গেজেট/ খেতাবপ্রাপ্ত গেজেট/ যুদ্ধাহত গেজেটঃ
 - মুক্তিযোদ্ধার বয়স প্রমাণের জন্য প্রমাণক দলিলাদির কপি (জন্ম নিবন্ধন/জাতীয় পরিচয়পত্র/এসএসসি সনদ/জন্ম নিবন্ধন আইন অনুযায়ী সিটি কর্পোরেশন/পৌরসভা/ ইউনিয়ন পরিষদের প্রত্যয়নপত্র) এবং
 - মুক্তিযোদ্ধা/শহীদ মুক্তিযোদ্ধার পুর-কন্যা এই মর্মে ইউনিয়ন পরিষদ চেয়ারম্যান/ সিটি কর্পোরেশন-এর ওয়ার্ড কাউন্সিলর/পৌরসভার মেয়র/ কাউন্সিলর কর্তৃক প্রদত্ত সার্টিফিকেট/ ওয়ারিশান সনদঃ
 - প্রতিবন্ধী প্রার্থীর ক্ষেত্রে সংশ্লিষ্ট অধিদপ্তর হতে প্রতিবন্ধিতার সপক্ষে প্রদত্ত সনদপত্র এবং
 - চাকুরিরত প্রার্থীদের ক্ষেত্রে তাদের স্ব-স্ব নিয়োগকারী কর্তৃপক্ষের অনাপত্তিপত্র।
- কোনো ক্ষেত্রে যাচাইত দলিলাদির ঘাটতি থাকলে বা পরবর্তীতে কোনো সময় প্রার্থীর যোগ্যতার ঘাটতি পাওয়া গেলে বা দুর্নীতি, অসত্য তথ্য প্রদান, কোনো জাল সনদ দাখিল, অসদুপায় অবলম্বন, প্রভাবপায় আশ্রয় নিলে বা আবেদনপত্রে গুরুতর (Substantive) ত্রুটি বা ঘাটতি দেখা গেলে বা প্রদত্ত তথ্য মিথ্যা প্রমাণিত হলে মৌখিক পরীক্ষার পূর্বে বা পরে যে কোনো পর্যায়ে উক্ত প্রার্থীর প্রার্থিতা বাতিল করা হবে।
- মৌখিক পরীক্ষায় অংশগ্রহণের জন্য প্রার্থীদের কোনো প্রকার টিএ/ডিএ প্রদান করা হবে না।

ডিসিপিঃ ৪৮/২০২৬-৯০
তারিখঃ ০৬/০১/২০২৬

মোঃ জব্বার ইসলাম
পরিচালক (এইচআরডি-১)

ব্যক্তিগত ও আর্থিক সেবা পেতে হয়রানির শিকার হলে কিংবা কোনো অভিযোগ থাকলে ১৬২৩৬ নম্বরে ফোন করুন।

The Daily Star

FOUNDER EDITOR: LATE S. M. ALI

Intelligence agencies' reform is a must

They need protection from misuse and a clearly codified mandate

Given our past experiences, intelligence agencies, including the Directorate General of Forces Intelligence (DGFI) and the National Security Intelligence (NSI), need urgent reform as recommended by the Commission of Inquiry on Enforced Disappearances, which demands the immediate attention of both the interim government and political actors vying for power in the forthcoming election. The assessment by the commission's chief, Justice Moyeenul Islam Chowdhury, requires urgent consideration.

For decades, successive governments—both elected and military-backed—have misused intelligence agencies to meddle in politics, directly and indirectly. This abuse reached unprecedented levels during the previous Sheikh Hasina regime. Intelligence agencies were allegedly tasked with fragmenting opposition parties, bribing compromised politicians to form splinter groups, controlling the media, and intimidating or eliminating prominent dissenting voices. Such practices have hollowed out democratic institutions and eroded public trust in the state.

It is therefore imperative that the mandates of these agencies be clearly codified to prevent their involvement in political affairs on behalf of any ruling party. Equally important is providing legal protection for intelligence bodies and officials who refuse to carry out unlawful orders, shielding them from retaliation or punitive measures for upholding the law.

The commission's recommendation against the routine engagement of armed forces in policing duties must also be heeded. The armed forces should be deployed only under extraordinary circumstances, such as when national security is genuinely at risk. The practice of seconding military personnel to civilian law enforcement bodies—most notably the Rapid Action Battalion (Rab)—has proven deeply problematic. The commission's finding that Rab accounts for 25 percent of enforced disappearances lends strong support to longstanding demands from both national and international human rights advocates for the force to be disbanded.

The commission has also rightly highlighted the widespread misuse of the Anti-Terrorism Act, 2009, recommending its fundamental overhaul or outright abolition. We commend its progressive approach to counterterrorism, including proposals for community-based preventive strategies, mandatory human rights training for law enforcement agencies, and the establishment of a victim-centred justice framework.

We share the commission chief's view that the country requires an intelligence apparatus, but one that operates within a robust legal and ethical framework. Comprehensive organisational reforms, coupled with strong legislative safeguards, are essential to ensure accountability. We also fully endorse the commission's call for enacting the Enforced Disappearance Prevention and Redress Ordinance, 2025, and for amending the National Human Rights Commission Ordinance, 2025, to prevent the recurrence of such grave abuses.

The interim government must seriously consider these recommendations in full and initiate the reform process without delay by introducing the necessary ordinances. At the same time, all political parties must unequivocally commit themselves to implementing these reforms. Without such collective resolve, the cycle of abuse will persist, undermining democracy, the rule of law, and fundamental human rights. We want highly efficient intelligence agencies guided and protected by law, and not one that can be politically misused by the ruling party of the day.

Cold wave demands urgent govt response

Lives and livelihoods at risk as fog and falling temperatures persist

We are deeply concerned by the persistent cold spell across the country, which has been taking a heavy toll, particularly on children, the elderly, and low-income communities. This year, La Niña has lowered temperatures and increased the frequency and intensity of cold waves in the country, making the winter harsher than usual. Experts warn of the possibility of severe cold waves later this month. With dense fog lingering since late December and temperatures plunging far below the seasonal norms, daily life has slowed dramatically in Dhaka and across northern districts. The situation is no longer a matter of discomfort; it has become a public health concern that demands urgent and coordinated action.

According to data from the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS), at least 48 people have died from cold-related illnesses since November. Hospitals across the country are under growing strain as cold-related ailments surge, particularly among children and the elderly. Admissions for acute respiratory infections have risen sharply, with thousands seeking treatment daily, and children's hospitals reporting that up to 40 percent of outpatients are suffering from cold-induced conditions. Health officials warn that the number of patients may continue to rise, placing further pressure on already stretched public healthcare facilities.

Day labourers across the northern districts are facing acute hardship as dense fog and biting cold severely disrupt daily work opportunities. Many wait for hours at hiring spots without being employed, while others, such as rickshaw pullers, are earning only a fraction of their usual income as people stay indoors. With no savings to rely on, even a single day without work makes it difficult for these workers to meet basic needs, including food for their families.

The government cannot afford to treat this biting cold as a routine seasonal event and must take urgent measures to address both cold-related health risks and the loss of livelihoods. Emergency distribution of warm clothing and blankets should be intensified, particularly in cold-prone districts and urban slums. At the same time, the private sector should step forward to support the most vulnerable. Strong coordination between health authorities, local administrations, and community organisations is essential. Public hospitals must be adequately prepared to handle the surge in patients, while health authorities should run awareness campaigns. With timely planning and decisive action, much of the suffering of the people during this harsh winter can be mitigated.

Why we must better use our off-docks



Ahamedul Karim Chowdhury is adjunct faculty at Bangladesh Maritime University and former head of the Kamalapur Inland Container Depot (ICD) and the Pangaon Inland Container Terminal under Chittagong Port Authority.

AHAMEDUL KARIM CHOWDHURY

Bangladesh's logistics system is under strain from pressures it was never designed to absorb. Chittagong Port, the country's principal maritime gateway, continues to grapple with chronic congestion as container volumes grow much faster than yard capacity and systemic efficiency improvements. The consequences are familiar but increasingly costly: vessel delays that disrupt supply chains, long dwell times that inflate logistics expenses, and hundreds of millions of dollars paid annually in demurrage and storage charges, much to foreign shipping lines. These inefficiencies ultimately undermine the competitiveness of Bangladesh's exporters, importers, manufacturers, and consumers alike, although the solution, to some extent, already exists. Bangladesh has a network of private inland container depots (ICDs), commonly known as off-docks, that remains chronically underused due to outdated policies and limited regulatory flexibility.

For decades, Bangladesh has operated with a structural imbalance in its cargo-handling architecture. While exporters have long relied on over twenty private ICDs for stuffing, handling, and clearance, import containers have largely been confined to the port yard under restrictive rules imposed by the National Board of Revenue (NBR). This asymmetry has forced the full burden of import congestion onto Chattogram port, limiting competition and suppressing system-wide efficiency. Meanwhile, off-docks—equipped with trained manpower, modern handling equipment, digital systems, and substantial unused yard space—have operated far below capacity. Globally, ports function as high-speed transit points rather than long-term storage yards. Bangladesh, unfortunately, has remained an exception.

In recent years, incremental reforms have begun to shift this paradigm. In 2025, the NBR approved 15 to 16 additional categories of imported goods for delivery through private ICDs, expanding eligibility to roughly 65 product categories. A directive was also issued requiring containers destined for ICDs to be transferred from the port on the same day of discharge, or by the following day if

immediate transfer is not possible. These steps were meant to speed up cargo flow and relieve pressure on congested port yards.

Still, congestion at Chattogram port remains acute. In calendar year 2025, the port handled a historic high of 3.41 million Twenty-foot Equivalent Units (TEUs), alongside 13.82 crore tonnes of cargo and 4,273 vessel calls—the highest in its nearly five decades of container operations. The port continues to handle around 92 percent of Bangladesh's total import-

exports, off-docks are still classified merely as service providers rather than as part of a formal logistics industry. This classification excludes them from industrial loans, tax incentives, and policy protections routinely extended to logistics operators in comparable economies. In contrast, major public logistics projects—such as Laldia Char Container Terminal or the Pangaon Inland Container Terminal—have benefited from generous fiscal support, including long-term tax exemptions and regulatory concessions. Private ICDs receive no such support, not even duty exemptions on essential equipment like reach-stackers, trailers, or container scanners. The result is an uneven playing field that discourages private investment and modernisation.

The scanner issue illustrates this policy misalignment clearly. While scanners at public ports and state-owned terminals are procured and operated by the government, private

became evident during the recent tariff controversy. After sharp increases in ICD handling charges prompted government intervention in 2024, a fresh dispute emerged in 2025, ultimately resolved through a temporary 20 percent tariff increase for six months following negotiations among exporters, ICD operators, and the Chittagong Port Authority. While the compromise averted operational disruption, it once again exposed the absence of a transparent, institutional mechanism for cost-based tariff determination.

This is where the idea of a national logistics commission deserves serious consideration. Such a commission could provide cross-ministerial coordination, harmonise tariff frameworks, align customs processes, and serve as a neutral referee among ports, off-docks, transport operators, and regulators. Bangladesh's logistics sector continues to suffer from fragmented decision-making that delays reform and inflates costs. Coherent oversight is long overdue.

The economic cost of inaction is substantial. Bangladesh loses hundreds of millions of dollars annually through avoidable demurrage, excess storage charges, and lost efficiency. If even half of all import containers were moved to off-docks within 24 hours of discharge, demurrage costs could fall by as much as 70 percent. Over time, the savings would strengthen foreign exchange reserves, lower the cost of doing business, improve export competitiveness, and stabilise consumer prices.

Recent reforms suggest growing recognition that outdated logistics practices are no longer sustainable. But partial measures will not be enough. Fully integrating off-docks into the national logistics architecture will require liberalising import access, ensuring scanner parity, recognising ICDs as an industry, establishing transparent tariff oversight, and adopting digitally enabled bonded-zone systems modelled on successful international examples. Off-docks, in turn, must commit to transparency, efficiency, and technological modernisation.

The recent tariff disputes, record-high container volumes, persistent congestion, and slow ICD expansion all point to the same conclusion: Bangladesh's logistics challenges are structural, not incidental. Continuing with outdated practices will only prolong inefficiencies and erode competitiveness. Embracing comprehensive reform offers a clear path forward. If Bangladesh is serious about sustaining its growth and competing in an increasingly demanding global market, the time to act is now.



Bangladesh's logistics sector continues to suffer from fragmented decision-making that delays reform and inflates costs. Coherent oversight is long overdue.

FILE PHOTO: STAR

export cargo and nearly 98 percent of containerised trade. Despite these impressive throughput numbers, yard density frequently hovered between 83 and 88 percent, well above optimal safety and efficiency thresholds. Vessel berthing delays persisted, particularly for gearless vessels, underscoring that record volumes alone do not translate into smooth operations.

At the same time, the off-dock sector itself—limited to only about 21 ICDs over nearly four decades—now faces mounting pressure from rising export volumes and incremental import flows. While national trade volumes have surged, ICD capacity expansion has lagged far behind, reinforcing congestion rather than easing it.

Infrastructure constraints, however, tell only part of the story. A deeper issue lies in policy recognition and incentives. Despite handling roughly 93 percent of Bangladesh's containerised

ICDs must finance both procurement and operation on their own. This has produced a stalemate: off-docks hesitate to invest without guaranteed increases in import allocation, while authorities hesitate to allocate more imports without adequate scanning capacity. Countries such as Malaysia and Thailand resolved similar deadlocks through shared-scanner models or government-backed financing schemes. Bangladesh will need a comparable approach if it wants to expand ICD participation while maintaining regulatory compliance.

Tariff setting has become another persistent source of friction. Despite having very different cost structures, off-dock tariffs often mirror those of Chattogram port, even though the port deliberately maintains high storage charges to discourage long dwell times—an incentive ICDs do not share. The fragility of this arrangement

The interim's unfinished conservation business



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HASEEB MD. IRFANULLAH

On June 7, 2008, Syeda Rizwana Hasan, then the director of the Bangladesh Environmental Lawyers Association (BELA), wrote a strong piece in *The Daily Star*. In that article, she highlighted the failure of the previous governments to formulate a village forest rule under the Bangladesh Forest Act, 1927. That rule, if formulated, was supposed to describe which piece of a reserved forest would be allocated to a village community as a "village forest," and how the community would enjoy forest products or pasture, and protect and improve the forest. The rule, however, was also not materialised in the next 16 years, at the end of which Syeda Rizwana Hasan became the environment advisor of Bangladesh following the July uprising. On January 28, 2025, she declared the interim government's plan to enact the village forest rule. One year on, it remains elusive. This shows that, in Bangladesh, despite having the authority, one may not succeed in doing what they advocated for a long time.

Nevertheless, the stories of success still exist. In November 2025, the interim updated the 31-year-old

forest policy as the *National Forest Policy, 2025*, which I support for three reasons. First, it extensively upholds inclusive and participatory management of forests and protected areas, appreciating Bangladesh's 30-year experience of community-based natural resource management, which involves forest-dependent local communities and indigenous peoples. Second, by focusing on an expansion of coastal forests and marine protected areas (MPAs), the new forest policy expects to actively contribute to the blue economy. Third, the policy also expects to explore carbon trading to channel funds for ecosystem conservation and management. All these highlight that the new forest policy is very advanced.

December 2025 saw some important developments in enacting two forestry-related ordinances: the Forest and Tree Conservation Ordinance, 2025 and the Wildlife (Conservation and Security) Ordinance, 2025. If gazetted before February 12, 2026, these ordinances could become two environmental milestones for Bangladesh. The new wildlife ordinance is supposed to fill in certain gaps in the Wildlife

(Conservation and Security) Act, 2012, by including several new and updated provisions. I want to touch upon two issues based on the publicly available draft version of November 16, 2025.

First, the ordinance authorises the government to establish a Wildlife Trust Fund for wildlife conservation. The Ecologically Critical Area Management Rules, 2016, the Protected Area Management Rules, 2017, and the Bangladesh Biodiversity Act, 2017, all already have provisions to create separate conservation funds. Since none of these has been materialised, there was no reason to be optimistic about the new fund. Second, like the Wildlife Act of 2012, the new wildlife ordinance includes the provision of declaring MPAs. The Marine Fisheries Act, 2020, also has detailed provisions for the same. The tension between the Forest Department and the Department of Fisheries over declaring MPAs has been going on for a long time. The Swatch of No-Ground (2014) and the St Martin's Island (2022) MPAs were declared under the Wildlife Act, whereas the Middle Ground and South Patches Marine Reserve (2000, now an MPA), the Nijhum Dwip (2019), and the Naf (2024) MPAs were declared under the Fisheries Ordinance/Act. The new wildlife ordinance doesn't indicate any resolution of the inter-ministerial conflicts over MPAs.

Despite these legal progresses, the Bangladesh government is still inadequate in conservation actions. The 20-year-long Bangladesh Wildlife Conservation Master Plan has remained on paper since 2015. The

same fate is looming for the National Conservation Strategy (2021-2036), which took Bangladesh an excruciating 40 years to prepare. There are many national species conservation and management plans, namely for the vulture (2016-2025), the gharial (2016-2025), the elephant (2018-2027), the tiger (2018-2027), the dolphin (2021-2030), and the sharks and rays (2023-2033). Indeed, some planned actions were implemented, and impacts have been seen. The Bengal tiger number, for example, increased from 106 (in 2015) to 125 (in 2024) due to several projects in the Sundarbans involving local people, researchers, and law enforcement agencies. A vulture rescue centre has been in operation in Singra National Park, Dinajpur, since 2016. In April 2025, the country's first gharial breeding centre was opened in Rajshahi. From sporadic media coverage, we also learn about some commendable conservation initiatives by national NGOs, local groups, and individuals. But, do we really have any idea where we stand in terms of implementing the long-term conservation plans, especially since some plans' timelines have already expired or will expire soon?

With the upcoming parliamentary election, I wonder how many of Bangladesh's political parties are talking about nature conservation in their manifestos. How many are going to put the unfinished conservation actions on their priority list? Will we vote for a rejuvenated Bangladesh with healthy, resilient ecosystems, or without?

Can Dhaka become a 15-minute city?



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FARZANA ISLAM TOMA

The idea of a 15-minute city has been on the table of policymakers, architects, urban planners, economists, and climate professionals worldwide for several years. Urban thinker Carlos Moreno brought the concept to global attention. It presents the idea of a city where everything we need in daily life should be reachable within 15 minutes by walking or cycling from home. This idea may sound familiar in the Bangladeshi context at first glance, yet a deeper look shows that its underlying principles and structural requirements remain far from being met in Dhaka. Interestingly, Chief Adviser Professor Dr Muhammad Yunus had mentioned a similar idea several years ago about "social-business cities," where social enterprises help provide essential services such as healthcare, housing, and education directly within communities. Both models seek a city where citizens can carry out their daily activities without being trapped in exhausting traffic for long hours. As many cities such as Paris, Barcelona and Melbourne have moved towards the 15-minute city model, a key question emerges: can Dhaka realistically achieve the core functions of such an urban framework?

The 15-minute city concept is simply about putting human needs at the centre of urban growth. It doesn't mean one cannot travel far when needed; rather, it means one shouldn't be forced to travel far for basic needs. Also, the way to reach these basic facilities should be accessible and comfortable for all groups of people. The model rests on four pillars: proximity, diversity and mixed land use, density, and ubiquity. Proximity, in terms of mobility, means that essential services should be close enough that people don't lose time in traffic just to buy groceries or see a doctor. It is measured by how far or fast people can travel easily without depending on a motorised vehicle. The diversity of land use



Walking for 15 minutes in any neighbourhood of Dhaka either feels unsafe, unpleasant, or physically exhausting for even people in good health.

FILE PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

Some aspects of Dhaka resemble the elements of a 15-minute city, but not by design. The city's dense, mixed-use neighbourhoods like Old Dhaka, Mohammadpur and Mirpur offer diverse land use with shops, schools, pharmacies, restaurants, and other services within walking distance. Informal economies and street vendors create hyperlocal access to essential goods.

offers different types of activities such as shops, offices, parks, schools, restaurants, healthcare, and sports facilities throughout the neighbourhood. Population density is considered an advantage in the model, if supported by good infrastructure like adequate public spaces, safe streets, clean and wide walkways, cycle lanes, etc. Ubiquity refers to the equal distribution of services among people from different socio-economic backgrounds. The model emphasises reducing disparities between affluent neighbourhoods and low-income areas.

Where does Dhaka stand in this? Well, Dhaka's reality is shaped by extreme density, rapid migration, poor infrastructure and traffic management, and decades of uneven

result, many residential neighbourhoods lack work opportunities, accessible healthcare, public spaces, or quality education. Besides, public space in Dhaka is scarce. Green areas per person fall far below global recommendations, and sidewalks are often broken or blocked, making walking uncomfortable or even dangerous.

Ironically, some aspects of Dhaka resemble the elements of a 15-minute city, but not by design. The city's dense, mixed-use neighbourhoods like Old Dhaka, Mohammadpur and Mirpur offer diverse land use with shops, schools, pharmacies, restaurants, and other services within walking distance. Informal economies and street vendors create hyperlocal access to essential

neighbourhood of Dhaka either feels unsafe, unpleasant, or physically exhausting for even people in good health, let alone vulnerable groups, because of narrow and obstructed footpaths, unbreathable air, unpredictable traffic, and a lack of public facilities. So, even if the services are physically nearby, they are not comfortably reachable.

So, is it possible for Dhaka to become a real 15-minute city? The answer is yes, but not in its idealised European form. Dhaka cannot retrofit itself into Paris, but it can evolve into a "15-minute neighbourhood network" in areas that already have the density and diversity, but not the liveability. Several actions are needed to achieve that. All neighbourhoods should have clean, wide,

accessible, and monitored under proper authority. A well traffic management system controlling vehicle numbers, routes backed by enforcement is also necessary.

The 15-minute city concept is not a utopian fantasy for Dhaka; it is a necessary paradigm shift with local adaptation of dense, lively, community-oriented, equitable neighbourhoods. As the city is struggling with pollution, congestion, and declining liveability, it can utilise its co-living nature and community-based neighbourhoods to become a healthier, people-oriented city. With strong political will, regulatory reform, and sustained investments, Dhaka still can begin its journey to the 15-minute model, one neighbourhood at a time.

Alternatives Bangladesh can explore to move away from the debt trap



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ZAKIR KIBRIA

Last month, at a seminar on the state of the economy, the chairman of the National Board of Revenue said that Bangladesh has "already slipped into a form of debt trap." This alarming statement, echoed by other senior officials, has set the national discourse alight with anxiety. However, before we succumb to the fear of an impending financial crisis, it's important to closely examine the economic assessment and consider whether the narrative of a debt trap is prematurely ruling out the potential for sovereign alternatives.

Let's start with the cold, hard numbers. Yes, our external debt has surged by 42 percent in five years to \$104.48 billion. Yes, debt servicing is now the second-largest expense in our national budget, after salaries and pensions. These are serious pressures. However, Bangladesh's debt-to-GDP ratio is within the manageable threshold for an emerging economy.

The true crisis is not the stock of debt, but the anaemic stream of revenue needed to service it. Our tax-to-GDP ratio has collapsed to a perilous 7.7 percent, one of the lowest in the world. Nearly a third of our meagre government income is consumed by debt repayments, starving public investment in health, education, and infrastructure. Furthermore, our external debt now stands at a staggering 192 percent of our export earnings in 2024. Sixteen percent of export earnings is needed just for debt servicing.

This is a liquidity and revenue crisis. The vulnerability stems from a hollowed-out revenue base and also a dangerous dependence on dollar-denominated borrowing. As the taka depreciates, the local currency cost of repaying foreign loans skyrockets, creating a vicious cycle. The solution, therefore, lies not in panic-induced austerity alone, but in a dual strategy:

radically strengthening domestic revenue collection and strategically de-risking from the volatile US dollar.

As these debt anxieties peak, the country is deep into a \$4.7 billion IMF programme, with the next tranche hanging in the balance. The IMF's prescriptions—fiscal discipline, a market-driven exchange rate, banking reforms—although presented as technocratic necessities, are also classic tools of geopolitical alignment, keeping countries under the Western-dominated Bretton Woods system.

That is why the debt-trap narrative often instils a fear that paralyses sovereign strategic thinking. It ignores the fact that some successful emerging economies, from India to Indonesia, have not chosen one bloc over another but have skillfully navigated a multipolar world to their advantage. While many in the Global South are rapidly constructing a parallel financial infrastructure, Bangladesh is lagging.

In July 2023, Bangladesh and India launched a landmark mechanism to settle bilateral trade in rupees, bypassing the dollar. Yet, this initiative remains underutilised and half-hearted. Contrast this with India and Russia: in December 2025, they reaffirmed their commitment to settling nearly all their \$68.7 billion bilateral trade in national currencies. Where is our aggressive push for settlement in local currencies with our largest trade partners?

Nations insulate their foreign exchange reserves through bilateral swap lines. In early 2025, Indonesia and China renewed a massive swap agreement worth RMB 400 billion. Bangladesh has discussed a yuan swap line with China, but it is yet to materialise.

Over 50 countries, including Bangladesh, have expressed interest in joining BRICS, a

bloc whose GDP now surpasses that of the G7. One advantage of joining BRICS is having access to alternatives like the BRICS Bridge—a payment messaging system designed to operate independently of SWIFT. Yet, Bangladesh's interest has not translated into a decisive strategy to engage with the New Development Bank.

The path forward requires the courage to look beyond the existing narrative. This can include activating and expanding the rupee-taka mechanism with India and initiating government-to-government negotiations with China, the UAE, and other major partners to establish bilateral local currency settlement frameworks. Each dollar of trade settled in taka or a partner's currency is a dollar of pressure lifted from our reserves.

In addition, Bangladesh should treat currency swaps not as a financial technicality but as a cornerstone of national economic security and pursue a major swap line with China to secure yuan liquidity. We must also explore similar arrangements with other friendly central banks to create a buffer against speculative attacks on the taka. Additionally, we should begin technical engagement to connect our banking system with the BRICS Cross-Border Payments Initiative (BCBPI), while pursuing BRICS membership.

However, external diversification is meaningless without internal accountability. We must end the culture of tax exemptions, digitally integrate the tax net, and aim to double the revenue-to-GDP ratio in five years. Concurrently, we need a war on NPLs that combines fast-track asset recovery tribunals with pragmatic restructuring of viable businesses to unplug the banking system.

Bangladesh has options to pull itself out of the "debt trap narrative," through vigorous domestic resource mobilisation and strategic diversification that can lead to sovereign agency in a multipolar world. The arithmetic is clear, the global examples are there, and the tools are being built by our peers in the Global South. The question is whether we have the political will to reach for the key that has always been in our own hands. The time for a strategic, sovereign pivot is now.

Incepta Hygiene and Hospicare Limited
40, Shahid Tajuddin Ahmed Sarani, Tejgaon Industrial Area
Dhaka-1208, Bangladesh (the "Company")

NOTICE OF EXTRA-ORDINARY GENERAL MEETING

NOTICE OF EXTRA-ORDINARY GENERAL MEETING OF THE SHAREHOLDERS AND MEMBERS OF INCEPTA HYGIENE AND HOSPICARE LIMITED ("THE COMPANY")

This notice is hereby given to all the shareholders and members of the Company in accordance with the direction of the Company Bench of the Hon'ble High Court Division of the Supreme Court of Bangladesh, comprising His Lordship, Mr. Justice Ahmed Sohel, Hon'ble Justice of the High Court Division, by an order dated 02.12.2025 passed in the Company Matter No. 2163 of 2025, an Extra-Ordinary General Meeting of the shareholders and members of the Company will be held on 22.01.2026 at 10.00 a.m. at 40, Shahid Tajuddin Ahmed Sarani, Tejgaon Industrial Area, Dhaka-1208, Bangladesh to consider the following agenda and accordingly pass a special resolution:

"To consider and approve, with or without modification, the Scheme of Amalgamation for the amalgamation of Incepta Vaccine Limited, Incepta Chemicals Limited, Incepta Herbal & Nutricare Limited, Incepta Hygiene and Hospicare Limited and Transuniverse Distribution Limited (collectively the "Transferor Companies") with Incepta Pharmaceuticals Limited ("Transferee Company") under Section 228 read with Section 229 of the Companies Act, 1994, whereby the entire undertaking of the Transferor Companies as a going concern is proposed to be transferred and vested in the Transferee Company, with the Transferee Company being the surviving entity."

The shareholders and members of the Company are requested to attend the meeting on the date, time, and at the place mentioned above.

A copy of the Scheme of Amalgamation may be collected from the undersigned.

Sd.
Managing Director



Landscape rendered in oil at 'THE COLOR OF NATURE'

Safiuddin Shilpalay is adorned with Shahida Parveen's marvelous paintings, most done with oil colours, and a few with watercolours. She is an MFA holder from the Institute of Fine Arts, University of Dhaka.

AISHWARYA RAIHAN

The grind and hustle culture, as a consequence of capitalism, has reduced the number of artists who have kept the practice of oil painting still alive. Acrylic colours, a fast-drying medium, saves time. But the ultra-smooth surfaces of oil paintings have a uniquely classy charm of its own, at least to me. And it's not every day I get to visit a solo art exhibition almost entirely dedicated to oil paintings.

Safiuddin Shilpalay inaugurated *The Color of Nature*, first solo art exhibition of artist Shahida Parveen on January 2. Eminent artist, Professor Emeritus Rafiqun Nabi graced the event as the chief guest. The ceremony was presided over by artist Professor Syed Abul Barq Alvi. Veteran cartoonist Professor Shishir Bhattacharjee was present as the special guest.

Safiuddin Shilpalay is adorned with Shahida Parveen's marvelous paintings, most done with oil colours, and a few with watercolours. She is an MFA holder from the Institute of Fine Arts, University of Dhaka. Her landscapes are



PHOTOS: COURTESY

not exceptionally detailed, and yet, they look as real as photographs. The artist explained that she loves the dreamlike qualities of impressionism and does her work accordingly. This particular art style stemmed from the rejection to perfectionism by European artists in the 19th century such as Vincent Van Gogh.

The beauty of Bangladesh, especially the districts of Bandarban, Rangamati, Magura, and Chuadanga, is the most prominent subject

in her work. The sunny afternoon sky – bright but eye-soothing, sunsets, trees, majestic hills, the transparency of the water, the adorably blooming waterlilies, boats, the ethereally beautiful Sunderbans – all come alive through her brushstrokes. She has also painted our southern islands near the borders which in her opinion felt like another dimension.

The artist has created portraits inspired from real people but has almost unnoticeably played with proportions to emphasise on the expressions rather than the features. One particular portrait with a mask on, surrounded by green leaves and dead leaves depicts the traumatic state and living with the unpredictability of life and death behind closed doors during the COVID pandemic.

In short, the exhibition creates a certain nostalgia for me and the reasons cannot be traced. It evokes a yearning to witness the ever-changing, forever astonishing natural beauty of our beloved motherland, to go see the known but unseen. The exhibition ran at Safiuddin Shilpalay until January 6, 2026.

Grammys reintroduce Best Album Cover category

The Recording Academy has reintroduced the Grammy Award for Best Album Cover, reviving the category for the first time in more than 50 years. The award will be presented at the 68th Grammy Awards on February 1, 2026, in Los Angeles.

The category recognises the growing cultural impact of album artwork in the digital era. Recording Academy CEO Harvey Mason Jr said the move aims to acknowledge creatives who shape the musical experience beyond sound.

This year's nominees include Wet Leg's *Moisturizer*, Bad Bunny's *Debi Tirar Más Fotos*, Tyler, the Creator's *Chromakopia*, Perfume Genius's *Glory*, and Djo's *The Crucx*. Under Grammy rules, trophies will go to art directors, while other contributors will receive certificates.



NEWS

Govt to launch monitoring hub

FROM PAGE 12

Imams and religious leaders will be involved in awareness efforts through mosques, temples and churches across the country, and leaflets are being printed and will be distributed nationwide.

The government will expand its voter awareness campaign using election caravans. Currently, 10 caravan teams are operating, each consisting of 10 vehicles.

The number will be increased to 20 so that the campaign can reach all 495 upazilas, including remote and island areas such as Bhola.

The caravans will operate until

January 31.

Regarding postal ballots, Shafiqul said that 1,533,682 signed up to cast their votes in this method before registration closes on Wednesday.

Of these, 761,140 are from inside the country, most of whom are involved in election duties and would not be able to vote in their respective centres. Another 772,542 registrants are non-resident Bangladeshis.

"This is the first time we are doing this, and the response has been unprecedented. Many countries are closely watching how our diaspora voting model works."

Postal ballots will be available once the final list of candidates is published, starting from January 21, he added.

Asked about the murder of Rana Pratap Bairagi, the acting editor of *Dainik BD Khabor*, in Jashore on Tuesday, Foyez Ahammad, senior assistant press secretary, said police have found no link between the incident and journalism or politics.

"The victim was previously accused in a murder case and was involved in extremist politics. The killing is believed to be linked to internal factional rivalry and investigations are ongoing."

Temperatures

FROM PAGE 12

for the past three days, especially when the cold intensifies at night. We had to bring our baby to hospital for admission."

Over the past three days till yesterday morning, at least 1,250 children were admitted to upazila and district headquarters hospitals across eight districts of Rangpur division, according to the health department.

Over 4,000 children – suffering from pneumonia, breathing issues, cough, fever, diarrhoea and bronchitis – have been treated at outpatient departments.

Dr Tapan Kumar Roy, a child specialist at Lalmonirhat Sadar Hospital, said children from poor and floating families are the most vulnerable. "Due to the lack of adequate warm clothing, nutritious food and proper shelter, children from these families are easily affected by cold-related illnesses. The situation of children in char areas and river erosion-affected regions is even more precarious."

Dr Mahfuzur Rahman, a child specialist at Rangpur Medical College Hospital, said that during winter, children's body temperature drops rapidly, weakening their immunity and increasing the risk of infection.

He stressed the importance of keeping children covered with warm clothing at all times, protecting them from cold air, and ensuring breastfeeding and nutritious food. "Parents should consult a doctor as soon as even mild symptoms appear."

Salman, Anisul

FROM PAGE 12

conversation, said protesters should be "finished off", saying the claim was denied outright.

He argued that the imposition of curfew was lawful under Section 24 of the Special Powers Act, which empowers the home ministry to do so, noting that even the current government had imposed curfew in Gopalganj to maintain law and order.

According to the formal charge, indiscriminate shooting of students followed the alleged conversation in Dhaka and elsewhere.

Addressing another allegation that Salman led businesspeople to a July 22, 2024 meeting with then prime minister Sheikh Hasina and urged continuation of the crackdown, the prosecution said the act amounted to incitement and participation in crimes against humanity.

The defence countered that Salman, acting as an adviser and businessman, merely conveyed business concerns without any ill intent.

It added that the meeting was held at the Prime Minister's Office, not Gono Bhaban, and claimed to have evidence to that effect.

On charges that Anisul oversaw the filing of 286 "false cases" against around 450,000 protesters – leading to illegal arrests and torture – the defence said the law minister had no authority over filing cases.

If aggrieved individuals do not lodge complaints, police file cases themselves, Munsurul said.

He argued that the charges lacked documentary support and that neither accused exercised control over law enforcement or auxiliary forces.

Police operations, he added, were directed by then Dhaka Metropolitan Police commissioner Habibur Rahman, not the accused.

Concluding his submissions, Munsurul said the prosecution had failed to show that Salman or Anisul acted beyond their legal responsibilities and again sought their discharge.

During the hearing, he requested that Anisul – who was in the dock alongside Salman – be given a pen and a piece of paper, which the tribunal allowed. Anisul later thanked the tribunal.

PROSECUTION'S REPLY

Chief Prosecutor Tajul Islam urged the tribunal to reject the discharge pleas, citing recorded conversations among Salman, Anisul and then state minister for ICT Zumaid Ahmed Palak.

He said the recordings showed they acted beyond the rules of business and wielded authority over cabinet decisions.

Tajul alleged the accused planned curfews and internet shutdowns to conceal mass killings and suppress protests, referring to discussions on shutting down the internet, imposing curfew, and blocking eight apps, including Facebook, YouTube and WhatsApp, while misleading the public by claiming services were damaged.

He further claimed that Salman spoke with the then inspector general of police and doctors in Rangpur to alter Abu Sayed's postmortem report, describing him as the de facto commander after the then prime minister.

Tajul rejected the curfew defence, arguing it was imposed to facilitate mass killings rather than restore order.

Meanwhile, in a separate case, ICT-2 yesterday allowed defence counsels to produce four witnesses on January 11 in a crimes against humanity case over the killing of seven protesters and the burning of six bodies in Ashulia on August 5, 2024.

Level playing field absent

FROM PAGE 2

comrades," he said, referring to the killing of Sharif Osman Hadi, spokesperson for Inqilab Moncho and a prominent youth leader of the July uprising. "This incident has further intensified people's concerns regarding this election."

He also criticised the lack of visible security measures, saying the party urged the EC to increase law enforcement presence at the grassroots level.

Raising doubts over whether the February 12 election would be free and fair, Asif said, "In the last three elections, we've seen administrative bias, ballot stuffing, and rigging under the cover of night. This has created fear that such practices could recur."

On the appeal process over nomination papers, he said the NCP wants neutrality. "We do not want any favoritism or preference towards any big party. Our desire is to build a democratic Bangladesh – something we haven't seen in the last 17 years."

Grocer hacked to death

FROM PAGE 12

rabbits at a nearby farm, about a five-minute walk from the shop, before heading home.

"He had no enmity with anyone and was not involved in politics. I demand a proper investigation and exemplary punishment for the killers."

The victim's younger brother Roni Chakraborty said Moni had lived in South Korea as an expatriate worker. He returned home around two years ago and started a grocery business.

"If this had been a robbery or snatching, the attackers would have taken his mobile phone, wallet or motorcycle. But everything was found intact," he said.

"So it does not appear to be a case of theft. We urge the police to uncover the motive behind my brother's murder," Roni added.

The killing has cast a pall of gloom over Charsindur Bazar.

"He was very friendly. His murder has left the entire bazar in shock," said Abu Sayed Mia, a betel leaf trader at the bazar.

A human chain was formed at Charsindur Bazar around 2:00pm yesterday, with the victim's family members, friends and well-wishers, traders and community leaders participating.

He also warned against any attempt to undermine the electoral process. "If that happens, we will not sit idle. If necessary, we will return to the streets to fight for free and fair elections."

Referring to BNP acting chairman Tarique Rahman's arrival, Asif said the differential treatment accorded to a party leader was "an ominous sign for Bangladesh's democracy."

"Regular visits by government officials and intelligence agency heads to a party office pose a threat to democracy," he added.

Meanwhile, after a five-member IAB delegation met the CEC, party spokesperson and senior joint secretary general Gazi Ataur Rahman said, "In various areas, one or two political parties are being given VVIP protocol. This has raised questions in the public mind and is an obstacle to a level playing field ahead of the election."

He also criticised what he termed excessive reactions following BNP

chairperson Khaleda Zia's death. "We mourn her passing, but the national mourning has been overstated. Schools and government institutions declared three days of mourning, and if this continues for months, especially during election time, it will be too much," he said, urging the EC to prevent political exploitation of the issue.

Meanwhile, on the second day of filing appeals against returning officers' decisions on nomination papers, 122 appeals were submitted to the EC yesterday, raising the total to 164 over two days.

According to EC data, the appeals were filed across 10 regions: Rangpur (10), Rajshahi (17), Khulna (16), Barishal (5), Mymensingh (16), Dhaka (23), Faridpur (5), Sylhet (8), Comilla (14), and Chattogram (8).

Earlier, on December 3, returning officers cancelled the candidacies of 723 individuals after scrutiny. The total number of valid candidates now stands at 1,842.

Drone strike kills 10 in Sudan's El-Obeid

AFP, Port Sudan

A drone strike on the Sudanese city of El-Obeid killed 10 people including seven children on Monday, a medical source told AFP.

An eyewitness said the strike hit a house in the centre of the army-controlled capital of North Kordofan, which the rival paramilitary Rapid Support Forces have sought to encircle for months.

Since April 2023, Sudan has been gripped by a war between the army and the RSF, with some of the worst violence currently unfolding in Sudan's strategic southern Kordofan region.

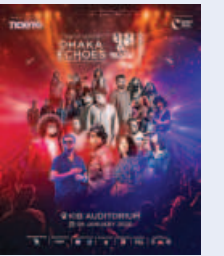
El-Obeid, the region's main city, lies on a key crossroads connecting the capital Khartoum with the vast western Darfur region – where the army lost its last major position in October.

Following its victory in Darfur, the RSF has pushed through Kordofan, seeking to recapture Sudan's central corridor and tightening its siege with its local allies around several army-held cities.

WHAT'S THE HAPS?

'Dhaka Echoes: Ghumparani Gaan'

Dhaka Echoes gathers a generation of Bangla rock and alternative voices to honour Shahrin Shahrir as his second album comes alive on stage. With performances by Level Five, Blue Jeans, A K Rahul, Adverb, Palash Noor, Masha Islam, Ritu Raj, and Angel Noor, the concert celebrates influence, memory, and the evolving sound of Deshi music.



DATE: FRIDAY | JANUARY 9, 2026
TIME: 3PM-11PM
VENUE: KIB AUDITORIUM, FARMGATE



DIFF set to open with Chinese feature

The Dhaka International Film Festival (DIFF) will open on January 10 with a Chinese feature, organisers confirmed. The festival begins with Chen Xiang's *The Journey to No End*, screened as the inaugural film at the Bangladesh National Museum.

Organised by Rainbow Film Society, DIFF will screen more than 246 feature-length and short films from over 70 countries across multiple venues in Dhaka.

The opening ceremony starts at 4pm, followed by the Chinese film at 5:30pm and the Iranian film *Without Me* at 7pm. The festival includes 11 competitive and non-competitive sections, including Bangladesh Panorama, which presents nine local films.

The nine-day event runs until January 18 and includes Chinese Film Week, celebrating global cinema.

Inqilab Moncho

FROM PAGE 3 At each location, the trucks stopped briefly as leaders addressed gatherings and reiterated their demand for justice. Before ending the programme, protesters visited Hadi's grave, where Inqilab Moncho Member Secretary Abdullah Al Jaber, along with others, offered prayers seeking eternal peace for his soul.

The march began around 11:30am from Shahbagh and passed through Science Lab, City College, Mohammadpur, Mirpur-10, Uttara, Bashundhara, Badda, Rampura and Jatrabari, before concluding in front of the National Museum in the evening.

Addressing the rally at Shahbagh, Jaber alleged that a "full-fledged killing syndicate" and elements within state machinery were involved in Hadi's murder. "Our movement will continue until those responsible are brought to justice. We will not accept any charge sheet that does not name them," he said, adding that no piece of paper can stop their struggle. He said the platform will announce its next

programme today and hinted that it could include actions aimed at forcing the law adviser or home adviser to resign. Referring to the chief election commissioner, Jaber said they do not want anyone who terms Hadi's killing an isolated incident to remain in office. "Our continuous programmes will go on until the CEC comes before

the public and offers an apology," he said. The platform's four-point demand includes a 24-day ultimatum for completing the trial of Hadi's killers, suspending work permits of Indian nationals in Bangladesh, filing a case against India in an international court if it refuses to repatriate convicted asylum seekers, and identifying what the platform calls "collaborators of fascists" within intelligence agencies.

JnU voting ends amid allegations

FROM PAGE 3 Held for the first time since the university's establishment 21 years ago, the election had 16,649 registered voters for the central union. A total of 190 candidates contested 21 central posts, while 33 candidates vied for 13 hall union posts. Voting was scheduled to end at 3:00pm but was extended to 3:30pm. Voters already in line were allowed to cast their ballots until 4:00pm.

Voting took place at 178 booths across 39 centres, covering 38 academic departments and one hall. Three LED screens were installed at different locations on and outside the campus to show live updates of the vote-counting process. University Proctor Prof Muhammad Tazammol Hoque said students were asked to leave the campus to ensure a smooth counting process and that law enforcement agencies were deployed to prevent any untoward incidents. ALLEGATIONS, COUNTER-ALLEGATIONS Several panels alleged irregularities during voting. At a press conference around 10:30am, the

Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD)-backed "Oikyoboddho Nirbhik Jobian" panel alleged that a certain panel was initially allowed to enter booths with tokens containing ballot numbers, while they were denied the same facility at first. Their VP candidate, AKM Rakib, said the practice was later allowed for all panels after evidence was presented, though discrimination occurred initially. About 15 minutes later, Chhatra Shibir-backed "Odommo Jobian Oikya" panel's VP candidate Riazul Islam alleged that JCD activists created disorder at the main gate after voting began and obstructed the distribution of voter slips. He also claimed voters were influenced at several centres. At around 11:00am, the Chhatra Shakti-backed "Oikyoboddho Jobian" panel also alleged irregularities. Its GS candidate Md Faisal Murad claimed two internal groups within the administration and election commission were favouring specific panels, raising concerns over the election's credibility. VP candidate Kishwar Anjum Samyo alleged displays of muscle power,

obstruction of polling agents from entering centres, and violations of the election code of conduct. STATEMENTS FROM TEACHERS' ORGANISATIONS The Teachers' Association and the University Teachers Link (UTL) held separate press briefings. At the UTL briefing, Prof Mohammad Bilal Hossain of History department said voter slips containing ballot numbers and candidates' names were not prepared according to election guidelines. He also questioned the source of students' ID information. Teachers' Association President Prof Rais Uddin said whoever wins in the election, the outcome would be accepted by teachers, officers, and staff. "Despite allegations and counter-allegations, the association views everyone equally," he said. Based on observations at 11-12 centres, the association estimated an average voter turnout of around 60 percent. Meanwhile, allegations emerged that the wife of Shibir-backed VP candidate Riazul Islam, Mahima

Akter, was harassed and handed over to police by JCD activists. Mahima alleged that while outside the university, she was harassed and asked to remove her hijab and mask. Riazul said his wife, a Law Department student, was assisting their panel when a mob was created by JCD activists. However, JnU unit of JCD Member Secretary Shamsul Arefin said a few women attempted to enter the campus claiming to be election commission members. As their identities could not be verified, police detained them. He said they were unaware if one of them was the wife of a Shibir-backed VP candidate.

him to the hall's guest room. The attackers demanded Tk 35,000 from his family as compensation. When his uncle, Abdur Rob Mia, refused to pay, they became enraged and beat Tofazzal with a cricket stump and a bamboo stick, leading to his death. After the killing, relatives told the media that Tofazzal had "lost his mind" following the deaths of his parents and brother and had become a drifter. Mohammad Amanullah, a supervisor at the DU estate office, filed a case with Shahbagh Police Station the following day.

PBI charges 28 DU

FROM PAGE 3 accused, only Wajibul is now on bail, according to the case records. The PBI took charge of the investigation after the court directed it on February 26 last year. According to the charge sheet, the incident began around 2:00pm on September 18, 2024, during a cricket match at the hall field, when six mobile phones were stolen. Later that evening, around 7:45pm, Tofazzal arrived at the field during a football match and was suspected of theft. Students punched and kicked him before taking

him to the hall's guest room. The attackers demanded Tk 35,000 from his family as compensation. When his uncle, Abdur Rob Mia, refused to pay, they became enraged and beat Tofazzal with a cricket stump and a bamboo stick, leading to his death. After the killing, relatives told the media that Tofazzal had "lost his mind" following the deaths of his parents and brother and had become a drifter. Mohammad Amanullah, a supervisor at the DU estate office, filed a case with Shahbagh Police Station the following day.

Need joint research

FROM PAGE 3 "We have not even been able to determine the volume of resources and their potential. These resources must be properly utilised, which will require extensive research and policy support," said Prof Yunus. He made the remarks when a survey and research report on marine fisheries and ecosystems, conducted by the research vessel RV Dr Fridtjof Nansen, was submitted to him by the committee at the State Guest House Jamuna. The survey was carried out from August 21 to September 21 last year. A total of 25 scientists from eight countries participated, including 13 from Bangladesh. Prof Sayedur Rahman Chowdhury of the Institute

of Marine Sciences at Chittagong University presented the research findings at the meeting, revealing the existence of 65 previously unidentified aquatic species. The study also found plastic waste at depths of up to 2,000 metres, which researchers described as a matter of serious concern. Compared to a 2018 study, the report shows a decline in large fish populations in deep-sea areas, while fish stocks in shallow waters are decreasing at an alarming rate. At the meeting, Fisheries Adviser Farida Akhter warned, "If targeted fishing continues in this manner, there is a risk that the Bay of Bengal will be depleted of fish. The government will take a decision regarding sonar-based fishing."

Once a vital route

FROM PAGE 3 "So even if we develop that abandoned side, it ultimately won't become functional," he added. He also said the city corporation does not have the funds to develop both sides. "This entire area is railway land. Meaning, even beyond the boundary wall, the whole area still belongs to the railway. The construction we carried out outside the boundary was done only after receiving a no-objection certificate from the railway." He said a rail project was supposed to renovate the entire road but completed only some portions before halting work. Despite repeated attempts, Railway Director

General Md Afzal Hossain could not be reached for comment. He also said the city corporation does not have the funds to develop both sides. "This entire area is railway land. Meaning, even beyond the boundary wall, the whole area still belongs to the railway. The construction we carried out outside the boundary was done only after receiving a no-objection certificate from the railway." He said a rail project was supposed to renovate the entire road but completed only some portions before halting work. Despite repeated attempts, Railway Director

Transuniverse Distribution Limited
40, Shahid Tajuddin Ahmed Sarani, Tejgaon Industrial Area Dhaka-1208, Bangladesh (the "Company")
NOTICE OF EXTRA-ORDINARY GENERAL MEETING
NOTICE OF EXTRA-ORDINARY GENERAL MEETING OF THE SHAREHOLDERS AND MEMBERS OF TRANSUNIVERSE DISTRIBUTION LIMITED ("THE COMPANY")
This notice is hereby given to all the shareholders and members of the Company in accordance with the direction of the Company Bench of the Hon'ble High Court Division of the Supreme Court of Bangladesh, comprising His Lordship, Mr. Justice Ahmed Sohel, Hon'ble Justice of the High Court Division, by an order dated 02.12.2025 passed in the Company Matter No. 2163 of 2025, an Extra-Ordinary General Meeting of the shareholders and members of the Company will be held on 22.01.2026 at 10.00 a.m. at 40, Shahid Tajuddin Ahmed Sarani, Tejgaon Industrial Area, Dhaka-1208, Bangladesh to consider the following agenda and accordingly pass a special resolution:
To consider and approve, with or without modification, the Scheme of Amalgamation for the amalgamation of Incepta Vaccine Limited, Incepta Chemicals Limited, Incepta Herbal & Nutricare Limited, Incepta Hygiene and Hospicare Limited and Transuniverse Distribution Limited (collectively the "Transferor Companies") with Incepta Pharmaceuticals Limited ("Transferee Company") under Section 228 read with Section 229 of the Companies Act, 1994, whereby the entire undertaking of the Transferor Companies as a going concern is proposed to be transferred and vested in the Transferee Company, with the Transferee Company being the surviving entity.
The shareholders and members of the Company are requested to attend the meeting on the date, time, and at the place mentioned above.
A copy of the Scheme of Amalgamation may be collected from the undersigned.
Sd. Managing Director

JOB OPPORTUNITY
A Leading Trading House dealing with Textile Machineries is inviting applications for the following sales positions. Total Vacancy: 06
Embroidery Machine • Yarn Dyeing and Fabric Dyeing Machine • Circular Knitting Machine
Asst. Manager (Sales): Experience: 3-5 years
Sr. Executive (Sales): Experience: 2-3 years
Executive (Sales): Experience: Not required
Education: BBA/MBA (Marketing)/Textile Engg./B.Sc or Diploma in EEE/Mechanical Engg. from any reputed university/institution.
Candidates must mention only one Field of Interest on the envelope. Interested candidates are requested to submit their CV with supporting documents within 25 January 2026 to the following address.
PACIFIC RSF ASSOCIATES LTD | Human Resource & Admin Department House-16, Road-99, Gulshan-2, Dhaka-1212.

বাংলাদেশ গ্যাস ফিল্ডস কোম্পানী লিমিটেড
Bangladesh Gas Fields Company Ltd.
(A Company of Petrobangla)
International Re-Tender Notice
1 Ministry/Division Ministry of Power, Energy & Mineral Resources/ Energy & Mineral Resources Division
2 Agency Bangladesh Gas Fields Company Ltd. (BGFCL), A Company of Petrobangla
3 Procuring entity Bangladesh Gas Fields Company Ltd. (BGFCL)
4 Procuring entity code -----
5 Procuring entity district Brahmanbaria.
6 Invitation Reference No. Tender Ref. No. BGFCL/GOODS/FP/232(R1) Dated January 05, 2026
7 Invitation for Procurement of Unit control panel spares (Allen-Bradley)
8 Procurement method One stage two envelope tendering (International Competitive Tendering)
9 Budget & source of fund Own Fund of BGFCL
10 Tender publication date January 07, 2026
11 Tender selling date & time a) Tender documents will be available between 09:00 hrs & 15:00 hrs (BST) on all working days (Sunday to Thursday) from January 07, 2026 to February 08, 2026. No extension in closing date for selling of tender documents will be allowed. b) Place: BGFCL's Liaison Office at Petrocentre (14th Floor), 3, Kawran Bazar C/A, Dhaka. c) Price of Tender Document: Tender documents will be sold on payment of USD 15.00 or BDT. 1,800.00 (non-refundable)
12 Tender closing date & time a) Date & time: February 09, 2026 up to 14:15 hrs (BST). b) Place: BGFCL Head Office, Meeting Room at 2nd Floor, Birashar, Brahmanbaria-3400.
13 Tender opening date & time a) Date & time: February 09, 2026 at 14:30 hrs (BST) in presence of the Tenderer's representatives, if any. b) Place: BGFCL Head Office, Meeting room at 2nd Floor, Birashar, Brahmanbaria-3400.
14 Date, time & place for pre-tender meeting Not applicable
15 Eligibility of tenderer Reputed firms, manufacturers and suppliers from all countries except Israel with the following international experience: (a) Tenderer must have overall minimum 05 (five) years experience. (b) If the tenderer is not the manufacturer himself, the tenderer must submit Authorization Letter from the manufacturer or manufacturer's authorized distributor to prove the quoted materials are genuine. (c) Tenderer shall have experience in supplying similar materials to other than the Tenderer's own country. (d) Manufacturer shall have minimum 10 (ten) years experience in manufacturing the offered products. (e) Manufacturer shall have valid ISO 9001, ISO 14001 & OHSAS 18001 certificates as well as tenderer shall have valid ISO 9001 certificate.
16 Description of goods Unit control panel spares (Allen-Bradley)
17 Tender security amount USD 700.00 or BDT. 85,500.00 In the form of Bank Guarantee only
18 Delivery time 120 days from the date of L/C opening
19 Name of official inviting tender Engr. M. K. Masuk
20 Designation of official inviting tender General Manager (Technical Services)
21 Address of official inviting tender Bangladesh Gas Fields Company Ltd. (BGFCL), Head Office, Birashar, Brahmanbaria-3400, Bangladesh, Telephone No. +8801730 093679, E-mail: prbgfcl@gmail.com/dgmfp@bgfcl.gov.bd
22 The procuring entity reserves the right to accept or reject any or all tenders.
Special information i) Tenders must remain valid for 120 (one hundred twenty) days from the date of closing of the tender. ii) The tender security must remain valid for 148 (one hundred forty-eight) days from the date of closing of the tender. iii) In case of any unavoidable circumstances such as strike, civil commotion, Govt. declared holiday, etc. tender will be received and opened on the following working day. iv) Tender(s) submitted after the deadline for receiving of tenders will be rejected and returned unopened to the tenderer. v) Tender submitted by e-mail will be rejected. Likewise photocopy of e-mailed tenders will also be rejected. vi) The procuring entity reserves the right to accept any or reject any or all tenders or annul the tendering process at any stage without assigning any reason whatsoever and without incurring any liability to the affected tenderers. vii) This tender will be conducted as per the Public Procurement Act 2006 and the Public Procurement Rule 2025. The aforesaid notice is also available at Petrobangla website @ www.petrobangla.org.bd and BGFCL website @ www.bgfcl.gov.bd.
28.10.1213.000.876.09.0046.26 (FP)
Engr. M. K. Masuk General Manager (Technical Services)

AGM 2024/25
Josephites Foundation
Previous: St Joseph Old Boys' Foundation (SJOBF)
The Executive Committee of Josephites Foundation (Previous: St Joseph Old Boys' Foundation - SJOBF) request the members to join the Annual General Meeting of 2024/25 to be held at School premises on Friday, January 23, 2026.
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
Venue: St Joseph Higher Secondary School 97, Asad Avenue, Mohammadpur, Dhaka Date: January 23, 2026. Time: 4pm

STATUTORY NOTICE
IN THE SUPREME COURT OF BANGLADESH HIGH COURT DIVISION (STATUTORY ORIGINAL JURISDICTION) Company Matter No. 2284 of 2025
An Application under Section-59 read with Section-60 of the Companies Act, 1994, AND IN THE MATTER OF:
Doreen Hotels and Resorts Limited --- Petitioner
VERSUS
Registrar, Joint Stock Companies and Firms and others --- Respondents
Take Notice that an application under Section 59 read with Section 60 of the Companies Act, 1994 has been filed before the Hon'ble High Court Division of the Supreme Court of Bangladesh on behalf of the above named Petitioner for the reduction of share capital of Doreen Hotels and Resorts Limited.
Upon hearing of the application on 23/12/2025 Hon'ble Company Judge Mr. Justice Ahmed Sohel was pleased to admit the said application and directed to file an affidavit-in-compliance within 30 days from the date of publication of the notice. If anyone interested to oppose the said application, he may appear before the Hon'ble Court either in person or through an Advocate.
Copy of the said application may be obtained from the undersigned on payment of necessary cost.
Advocate Md. Ashraful Alam Room No.3024 (2nd Floor) Annex Bar Building, Supreme Court Bar Association, Shahbag, Dhaka. Phone: 01757363659.

বাংলাদেশ বিদ্যুৎ উন্নয়ন বোর্ড
Bangladesh Power Development Board
Invitation for e-Tender
Works Procurement, Open Tendering Method (OTM)
Tender Notice No. 27.11.6863.457.68.338.2026-35; Date: 06.01.2026
Tender/Proposal ID : 1204887
Description of tender : Procurement of DC Charger Module, Electronic Cards, CT, PT, Thyristor, Magnetic Contactor, MPCB, Breaker and different spares electrical components of GBC-Soft Starter, GCB, SF6 Pressure meter, Remote control panel, UPS Panel of Gas Booster Compressor, Nitrogen Plant.
Publication date & time : 08.01.2026, 12:00 hrs
Last selling date & time : 28.01.2026, 12:30 hrs
Tender closing date & time : 29.01.2025, 11:00 hrs
This is an online tender where only e-Tenders will be accepted in e-GP Portal and no offline/hard copy will be accepted. To submit e-Tender please register in the National e-GP Portal (http://www.eprocure.gov.bd) is required. The fees for downloading the e-Tender documents from the National e-GP Portal is to be deposited online through any registered bank 28.01.2026 at 12:30 hrs. Further information and guidelines are available in National e-GP System Portal and from the e-GP help desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd).
Mohammad Abul Basher ID # 1-01606 Executive Engineer (Electrical) Maintenance, 4th Unit Re-powered CAPP Ghorashal Power Station BPDB, Palash, Narsingdi

YEAR-IN JUDGMENT REVIEW

Notable Supreme Court decisions of 2025

KHALID KHAN

A number of landmark decisions were handed down by the Supreme Court of Bangladesh (SCOB) in 2025. This write-up compiles some of the landmark judgments that have significant constitutional and socio-political impacts.

CARETAKER GOVERNMENT REINSTATED, EFFECTIVE PROSPECTIVELY

In a landmark judgment, on 20 November 2025, a seven-member bench of the Appellate Division (AD), headed by the then Chief Justice Syed Refaat Ahmed, unanimously overturned its verdict handed down in 2011 and restored the caretaker government system. The Non-Party Caretaker Government system, which was introduced in 1996 by the 13th Constitutional Amendment, was held unconstitutional by the majority view of the seven-judge bench of the Appellate Division. The current decision came after allowing two separate appeals and four review petitions filed against the 2011 verdict. The Court in the review petition held that the impugned judgment is 'tainted by several cited errors apparent on the face of the record,' and thus set it aside. As a result, arguably, the provisions of Chapter IIA of Part IV of the Constitution relating to the Non-Party Caretaker Government have been revived. However, the revived provisions shall operate only prospectively, the Court held. The decision will, hopefully, open the door to a stable and consistent electoral practice and ensure free and fair elections in Bangladesh, thus strengthening democracy.

ARTICLE 96 RESTORED IN FULL, DIVERGENT VIEWS ON CODE OF CONDUCT

On 5 June 2025, the SCOB released the full-text judgment of the 16th Amendment review case. Last year, the AD disposed of the review petition filed by the previous government that sought to overturn the 2017 verdict scrapping the 16th Constitutional Amendment. In this judgment, the Court labelled the 16th Amendment as an attempt to put the independence of judges at stake by putting the power to remove judges in the hands of the parliament. Apart from restoring Article 96 in its entirety, the apex Court, in the full judgment, take divergent views on 39-point judicial code of conduct. The then Chief Justice observed that 'the Code of Conduct is to be considered as permitting of growth and mutations by drawing on the inherent power of only the Supreme Judicial Council to revisit existing provisions as and when necessary.' However, the validity of the code as authored by the AD was questioned by other Justices, necessitating a fresh formulation. In essence, the verdict reinstated the independence of the

judiciary and judicial accountability, leaving the question of code of conduct open.

LEGITIMACY OF THE INTERIM GOVERNMENT UPHELD

The Appellate Division, on 4 December 2025, upheld the verdict by the High Court Division (HCD) that summarily rejected the writ petition questioning the legality of the interim government. The seven-member bench led by the then Chief Justice Syed Refaat Ahmed unanimously rejected the leave petition against the judgment by the HCD with observations. The writ petition questioned the process of formation and oath-taking of the interim government on the ground that it was not supported by any legal document. On 13 January this year, the HCD rejected the petition, saying it was malicious and unacceptable since the government was formed and sworn in under the advisory opinion of the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court. In effect, the present order has cleared the way for the interim government to hold elections and implement reforms.

PRICES OF LIFE-SAVING DRUGS TO BE FIXED BY GOVERNMENT

The HCD, in a judgment delivered on 25 August 2025, directed the prices of all life-saving medicines under the

life-saving medicines.

MARRIAGE AND DIVORCE INFORMATION TO BE REGISTERED ONLINE

In a landmark decision, the HCD ruled that all marriage and divorce information must be mandatorily registered digitally. It also directed the secure storage of such information and enabled the citizens (especially women) to verify the records and obtain digital copies thereof. The bench consisting of Judge Fahmida Quader and Judge Md Ashif Hasan delivered this verdict on 11 December 2025, observing that the traditional system of marriage and divorce registration makes verification of marriage and divorce difficult, thereby undermining family stability and creating complications concerning the legitimacy of marriage. It also found that the lack of a digital database incentivises fraudulent practices and thus violates the fundamental rights protected under articles 31 and 32 of the Constitution. Finally, it can be opined that digitalisation of marriage and divorce will ensure transparency, prevent fraud, and reduce family-related disputes.

POLITICAL PARTIES TO CONTEST NATIONAL ELECTIONS USING THEIR OWN SYMBOLS

The HCD on 11 December upheld the amended provision of the Representation of People Order, 1972 (RPO) that prevents the political parties from using the symbol of their partner party in an electoral coalition. Earlier, the Government brought a number of amendments to the RPO, including the impugned provision requiring political parties to contest national elections using their own symbols despite being in a coalition. On 1 December 2025, in response to a writ petition, the Court issued the rule asking the Government and the Election Commission why the provision should not be declared illegal and unconstitutional. It was argued that the amended provision restricts political freedoms and disrupts long-established electoral practices. The bench of Judge Fatema Najib and Judge Fatema Anwar discharged the rule after hearing the arguments. The petitioner has expressed its willingness to move an appeal before the AD. It can be argued that the earlier provision favoured small political parties, helping them overcome their limited organisational capability by making coalition with larger political parties.

To conclude, 2025 was a vibrant and proactive year producing some of the landmark verdicts that have contributed to our constitutional jurisprudence, and at the same time, reached the downtrodden populace of our society.

The writer works at Law & Our Rights, The Daily Star.

The year 2025 emerged as a vibrant and proactive year, delivering several landmark verdicts that enriched our constitutional jurisprudence while simultaneously extending justice to the downtrodden sections of society.

Drug and Cosmetics Act 2023, to be determined by the Government, and not the pharmaceutical companies. This decision came as an outcome of a Public Interest Litigation filed by Human Rights and Peace for Bangladesh in 2018, challenging a 1994 circular that fixed the prices of only 117 medicines, leaving the prices of other drugs to be settled by the manufacturing companies. The Court noted that medicines are not luxurious items and that fixing the price of the medicine is not a privilege of the manufacturers. The Court also directed the authorities to frame clear guidelines for preparing the list and fixing the prices. The judgment may be particularly helpful for the ailing patients suffering from diabetes, kidney or heart diseases. At the same time, it enables the poor and marginalised classes to have access to



YEAR-IN LAW REVIEW

Key legislative reforms of 2025 in Bangladesh

JEBU MOBASHWIRA, REZOAN ASRAF

Bangladesh experienced major changes to its legal framework through ordinances in 2025. In total, the President promulgated 78 ordinances (at the time of writing this piece) across a wide range of areas. Most of them came into being as part of the ongoing reform process. Some of the most notable ones are discussed in this piece.

THE CODE OF CRIMINAL PROCEDURE (AMENDMENT AND SECOND AMENDMENT) ORDINANCE 2025

The long-awaited amendment to the Code of Criminal Procedure 1898, introduces several important reforms. A key change is the revision of the power of magistrates under section 32, empowering first-class, second-class, and third-class magistrates to impose fines of up to BDT 5 lakh, BDT 3 lakh, and BDT 2 lakh, respectively. The amendment further inserts sections 46A-46E to strengthen safeguards for the arrested persons. Those provisions require disclosure of police identity, preparation of a memorandum

limited to boys under the age of sixteen, leaving men above this age unprotected from non-consensual sexual acts. Additionally, fines for certain offences have been increased and a separate Tribunal for Child Rape Offences have been introduced.

INTERNATIONAL CRIMES (TRIBUNALS) (AMENDMENT) ORDINANCE 2025, FOLLOWED BY SECOND AND THIRD AMENDMENTS

The International Crimes (Tribunals) Act 1973 underwent significant amendments in 2025 through three successive ordinances aimed at modernising the trial process and establishing better public accountability. This reform was first initiated by Ordinance No. 04, i.e., The International Crimes (Tribunals) (Amendment) Ordinance, 2025. Sections 4, 8, 9, 11, 12, and 19 were amended. Specifically, these amendments clarified the process for initiating proceedings, enhanced judicial powers, and importantly, amended section 19 to modernise evidentiary rules by allowing non-technical procedures. The second amendment inserted a new clause

Bangladesh experienced major changes to its legal framework through ordinances in 2025. Most of these ordinances came into being as part of the ongoing reform process. Some of the most notable ones are discussed in this piece.

of arrest, mandatory recording and digital display of arrest information in the General Diary (GD), access to a lawyer preferably within twelve hours of arrest, and the provision of necessary medical treatment where the arrestee is ill or injured.

The power of arrest without a warrant under section 54 has also been tightened. Newly inserted section 67A concerns accountability of the arresting authorities in cases of non-compliance or negligence. Additionally, section 167(2A) introduced that the physical condition of the accused may be examined both before and after police custody. To ensure effective supervision, senior police officials may call for an interim investigation report before submission of the final report under Section 173A.

CODE OF CIVIL PROCEDURE (AMENDMENT) ORDINANCE 2025

The Code of Civil Procedure 1908 has been amended to make it up to date. Compensation for false claims or defence has been raised to BDT 50,000 to prevent unnecessary harassment. To reduce procedural delays, Order V now recognises electronic modes of service of summons, including by Short Message Service (SMS), voice calls, and instant messaging services. Accordingly, the plaintiff must now include the mobile numbers, National Identity Numbers, and email addresses of both the plaintiff and the defendant. Further reforms to expedite proceedings include limiting adjournments before peremptory hearings (Order XVII), allowing up to ten suits per day (previously five), and increasing the total suits at the peremptory stage from 100 to 200 (Order XVIII, Rule 20). Additionally, Order XXI, Rule 104 allows a decree-holder to apply for execution of the decree within the same suit, eliminating the need to file a separate execution case and thereby reducing procedural complexity.

WOMEN AND CHILDREN REPRESSION PREVENTION (AMENDMENT) ORDINANCE 2025

Notable changes to this Act include the redefinition of rape to recognise that perpetrators of any gender may be held criminally liable, replacing the earlier definition, which presumed the perpetrator to be only male. The inclusion of the term "Balatkar" now recognises as rape any forced sexual act committed by any person involving the mouth or anus of a male child (sections 2(gg) and 9(2)). However, this protection is

under section 2 to define "organisation" broadly to include political parties and their affiliates, and inserted a new section 20B titled "Punishments, etc. for organisation," empowering the Tribunal to suspend, ban, or confiscate the property of organisations found involved in crimes. The harshest amendment came through the Third Amendment, which introduced a new section 20C. Going against the general norm that disqualification occurs only after conviction, this particular amendment states that an accused shall lose their eligibility and be disqualified from being elected or serving as a Member of Parliament as soon as a formal charge has been submitted against them under section 9(1). This provision also bars an accused from holding any key position within the service of the Republic. This amendment implied that these disqualifications will be effective throughout the entire trial and shall only cease if the accused is formally discharged or acquitted by the Tribunal.

CYBER PROTECTION ORDINANCE 2025

This Ordinance was introduced to replace the harsh Cyber Security Act 2023 (CSA). Even though the new Ordinance removed the contentious section 42 of the CSA (arrest without warrant); arguably, section 35 of the new Ordinance serves the same purpose with a safeguard clause as per article 33 of the Constitution. Additionally, the Ordinance retains punishment for technical crimes under sections 17-20, namely hacking, identity theft, and cyber-terrorism. Finally, offences committed under this new legislation have been made mostly bailable, thereby aiming to mitigate practices of indeterminate pre-trial detention that characterised the predecessor legislation.

BANGLADESH LABOUR (AMENDMENT) ORDINANCE 2025

The Ordinance made some essential changes to the Bangladesh Labour Act 2006 and is mainly intended to meet the EU roadmap and ILO convention requirements. The most important change is under section 179, which lowers the percentage requirement needed to establish a trade union for all factories, irrespective of their size. Lastly, this Ordinance has increased the imposed penalty for "unfair labour practices" under sections 294-295.

The writers are Official Contributors to Law & Our Rights, The Daily Star.





Salman, Anisul 'behind curfews, internet closure' Alleges prosecution

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A defence lawyer yesterday urged International Crimes Tribunal-1 to discharge former prime minister's adviser Salman F Rahman and ex-law minister Anisul Huq in a crimes against humanity case linked to the July 2024 uprising.

The lawyer argued that both were innocent and had acted strictly within the rules of business.

Oposing the plea, the prosecution asked the tribunal to frame charges, citing audio recordings of conversations between the two during the student-led movement.

It alleged that they incited, abetted and planned violence, and were complicit in the killing of around 1,400 people and the injury of nearly 25,000 others.

After hearing both sides, the tribunal fixed January 12 for passing its order. The charges were brought on December 4 last year.

Defence lawyer Syed Munsurul Hoque Chowdhury rejected an allegation that Anisul, in a phone

SEE PAGE 8 COL 2



PHOTO: STAR

Students of Jagannath University queued near polling stations as voting in the JnUCSU polls took place from 9:00am to 3:30pm yesterday. According to university authorities, the student union election recorded a 65 percent voter turnout. Story on page 3.

ENFORCED DISAPPEARANCES Systematic crime, not aberrations Says commission as it refutes officials' claims of innocence

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Enforced disappearances in the country were not the work of rogue officers or isolated incidents, but a deliberate state-run campaign, the Commission of Inquiry on Enforced Disappearances said in its report.

Refuting claims of innocence by senior officials, the Commission said that evidence shows the operations were part of an organised state security framework – planned and coordinated across military, police, and intelligence services – making ignorance or justification on security grounds implausible.

Considering the persistence of these activities, the Commission said, both individual officers and the agencies they represented cannot evade responsibility.

The report, shared yesterday by the Chief Adviser's Press Wing, indicates that multiple agencies were involved, including the Directorate General of Forces Intelligence (DGFI), Rapid Action Battalion (Rab), and National Security Intelligence (NSI).

These agencies not only carried out the detentions but also coordinated and concealed them, the report reads. Senior officers, including Lt Gen Akbar of DGFI, were directly implicated in authorising or sustaining unlawful detentions, it added.

A common defence by those implicated is that they did not personally order the abductions or carry them out, or that the detainees and facilities predated their tenure.

POLLS PREPARATIONS Govt to launch monitoring hub

Religious leaders to raise awareness on referendum

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government is setting up a central monitoring system to receive real-time information on any disruption or violence during voting.

The home ministry is working to set up monitoring control rooms at upazila, district, divisional and central levels to ensure rapid response, said Shafiqul Alam, the chief adviser's press secretary, at a press briefing yesterday to outline the government's preparations for the February 12 polls.

Asked about the security of candidates, he said the matter remains a priority and that protection is being provided based on assessed risk.

If anyone requires additional security at the local level, the police will assess the situation and take action accordingly.

Around 75 percent of the members from the police, Ansar, Border Guard Bangladesh and Coast Guard have already completed training.

Training on the use of CCTV and body cameras is also underway and expected to be completed by January 31, he said.

He pointed to the successful management of several large-scale events in recent weeks as evidence of the security forces' readiness.

"The confidence of our security forces is now stronger than ever."

Addressing concerns over doubts about whether the election will actually take place, Shafiqul said there are 37 days left and the government is fully prepared.

The government is also working with the religious affairs ministry to encourage public participation in the referendum.

SEE PAGE 8 COL 1

Temperatures plunge further in the north

Hospitals see rush of child patients as cold wave intensifies in 10 dists

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The cold wave sweeping over northern Bangladesh has intensified significantly, disrupting the lives of poor and disadvantaged communities and hampering business activities.

The Bangladesh Meteorological Department said a mild to moderate cold wave is currently occurring in 10 districts – Rajshahi, where the lowest temperature was recorded yesterday; Pabna, Bogura, Dinajpur, Nilphamari, Panchagarh, Rangamati, Jashore, Chuadanga and Kushtia – and may persist over the next five days.

The chilling weather and dense fog have brought these districts to almost a standstill, reports our district correspondents.

According to Met officials, the temperature may fluctuate over the next three to four days and is likely to rise from the 10th or 11th of this month.

In Rajshahi, the temperature fell from 10 degrees Celsius on Monday to 7 degrees Celsius yesterday, marking the lowest temperature of the season so far, according to the Rajshahi Meteorological Office.

While the elderly and children remain the worst affected, the cold has also created severe hardship for low-income people, particularly

outdoor workers.

Abul Bahar, a rickshaw puller from Rajshahi city's Bhadra area, said his work has become extremely challenging. "While it's already difficult with my hands and feet going numb, the number of passengers is also low and so there is almost no income."

Health experts warn that children from poor, floating, char and erosion-affected communities are the most vulnerable during winter due to inadequate warm clothing, nutrition and shelter, urging parents to seek medical help at the first sign of symptoms.

Amzad Hossain, a day labourer from the Talaimari area, said, "We aren't getting enough work because of the cold. It has become difficult to run the family during this winter. It is even worse when the sun does not come out."

Meanwhile, in Dinajpur, the temperature was recorded at 9 degrees Celsius, in Saidpur 10 degrees Rangpur 11.9 degrees,

and Kurigram's Rajarhat 10.5 degrees, said observatory official Jitendranath.

Rahena Begum, 60, of Sahapara village in Panchagarh's Boda upazila, said, "The severity of the cold has become difficult to bear, especially from evening till the next morning. I can't stay warm even if I have two or three blankets on me."

Anikul Chandra Barman, 55, of Moidandighi village in the same upazila, said it has become challenging to do necessary work in the crop fields, especially with strong cold gusts.

The Rangpur region has been experiencing the cold spell since December 23, with the minimum temperature fluctuating between 8.6 and 11.9 degrees Celsius, while district and upazila hospitals are filling up with child patients affected by cold-related illnesses.

Visiting the paediatric department at Rangpur Medical College Hospital, our correspondent saw a severe shortage of beds.

Some beds had multiple children sharing them, and most of the patients were between one and five years old.

Sabina Begum, a resident of the Tajhat area in Rangpur city, said, "My one-year-old child has been suffering from breathing problems

SEE PAGE 8 COL 1

- Command responsibility firmly established
- Political opponents disproportionately targeted during polls, unrest
- Evidence destruction highlights institutional failure
- No legal or security justification exists

The Commission rejected the arguments, stating that responsibility for the crimes cannot be confined to the original act. Enforced disappearance is a continuing crime; as long as a victim remains unlawfully detained and their whereabouts concealed, the crime persists, it said.

Officials assuming control over detention facilities inherit responsibility for ongoing violations.

The report cited the 2024 army inquiry into Brigadier Azmi's abduction, which concluded that subsequent commanders who maintained his detention were equally responsible.

Another claim is that senior officials were unaware of the disappearances.

The Commission also dismissed this, noting the scale, duration, and visibility of the practice made ignorance implausible. Enforced disappearances occurred nationwide over several years, affecting thousands of victims, documented in media reports, court proceedings, and family testimonies.

The Commission's framework for accountability does not require proving that an official personally ordered the abductions. It only requires proving that they knew, or should have known, of the ongoing violations and failed to act.

Testimonies, including those of Lt Gen Akbar, confirm that top officials were aware of these actions. Akbar admitted discussing the disappearance of Humam Quader with former prime minister Sheikh Hasina, who instructed that the detainee be released, showing high-level knowledge and involvement.

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Grocer hacked to death on his way home

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Narsingdi

A grocery shop owner was hacked to death at Charsindur Bazar in Narsingdi's Palash upazila on Monday night.

The victim, Moni Chakraborty, 40, was a resident of Sadharchar Union in Shibpur upazila.

Like every day, he closed his shop around 11:00pm and was heading home when unknown assailants suddenly attacked him with sharp weapons, leaving him critically injured, police said.

Locals rushed him to Palash Upazila Health Complex, where doctors declared him dead, said Shahed Al Mamun, officer-in-charge of Palash Police Station.

Residential Medical Officer of Palash Upazila Health Complex Abdullah Al Mamun told The Daily Star that the victim had injuries to the back of his head.

"Primarily, it appears to be an injury caused by sharp weapons. He was brought to the hospital dead on Monday night, and the body was sent to Narsingdi Sadar Hospital for autopsy this morning [Tuesday]," he added.

The victim's father, Madan Chakraborty, said, "After closing the shop, my son was on his way to feed

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A passenger sits by the homeless people taking shelter on the platform of Kamalapur Railway Station, wrapping themselves in whatever clothing they can find to fend off the cold. A dog curled up nearby, seeking the warmth of human presence. The photo was taken around 2:00am yesterday, when the temperature in the capital dropped to around 14 degrees Celsius.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

11-year-old killed on father's orders Uncle who committed the murder confesses

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Patuakhali

An 11-year-old girl was murdered by her uncle in Patuakhali's Rangabali upazila, allegedly on the orders of the child's father, police said.



Victim's father

The victim, Ayesha Moni, was a fifth-grade student from Majhneta village in Rangabali.

Md Sirajul Islam, officer-in-charge of Rangabali Police Station, said the child's father had ordered the killing, according to the victim's paternal uncle Rubel Pyada, who confessed before Senior Judicial Magistrate Md Dolon Hasan under Section 164 of the Code of Criminal Procedure on Monday.

The court sent Rubel to jail following his confession, he said, adding that based on his statement, the child's father Babul Pyada was arrested the same night and sent to jail yesterday.

Police said Ayesha had learned about her father's extramarital affair and shared the information with her elder sister and mother, who is currently abroad.

Following this, Babul allegedly

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