



"We are going to do something on Greenland, whether they like it or not."

US President  
Donald Trump

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## Vengeance brings disaster, dialogue is the way

Tarique says at meet with senior journalists

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Sustaining the democratic process and ensuring accountability at every level, at any cost, is essential to bringing meaningful changes to the country, BNP Chairman Tarique Rahman said yesterday.

Bangladesh must be freed from the politics of vengeance, he said, stressing that political differences should never harden into deep divisions.

"We are facing tough challenges. The democratic process must be kept alive at all costs. We had problems, we have problems, but we do not want to return to the situation before August 5, 2024. Therefore, putting aside our differences, everyone must work



together," Tarique said at an event where he exchanged greetings with editors and journalists at a city hotel.

Recalling moments that shaped his political outlook, he referred to his father's janaza in 1981, his mother's janaza on December 31, 2025, and the events of August 5, 2024.

"So I feel this is not only about me. For the leaders and activists of my party, and for the people of the country as a whole, these examples are perhaps the clearest reasons why there is absolutely no need to go back to the situation before August 5," he said.

Tarique warned that violence and cycles

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FREE SPEECH KEY TO DEMOCRATIC TRANSITION -- PAGE 2

## City kitchens go cold amid gas crisis

TUHIN SHUBHRA ADHIKARY and SHAHEEN MOLLAH

Gas supply to thousands of homes in different parts of the capital came to a complete or partial halt yesterday morning after a key valve on a distribution line burst.

The valve explosion in front of Gono Bhaban on Mirpur Road comes on the heels of a leak in a major pipeline under the Turag river last week.

A valve is a mechanical device used to control the flow of gas through a pipeline.

The incident left large swathes of the capital -- particularly Dhanmondi, Mohammadpur, Shyamoli, New Market, Hazaribagh, Gabtoli, Farmgate, Kazipara and Shewrapara -- with little to no supply yesterday.

To repair the leak, several valves in the distribution network were shut, worsening pressure in Dhanmondi, Mohammadpur, Shyamoli, New Market, Hazaribagh and surrounding areas, said Titas Gas Transmission and Distribution, which supplied gas through pipelines in Dhaka and surrounding areas, in a press release.

With kitchens rendered near unusable, many families were forced to rely on induction stoves or restaurant food, driving up demand and costs. Long queues were seen in front of eateries across affected neighbourhoods, where customers complained of sudden price hikes.

Abu Kalam, an auto rickshaw driver in Purba Kazipara, was seen buying lunch for his three-member family from

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PHOTO ON PAGE 14, MORE BI, B3

MUSABBIR MURDER  
DB detains  
'shooter, 2  
others'

TOUSIF KARIM

The Detective Branch (DB) of Dhaka Metropolitan Police has detained three individuals, including an alleged shooter, in connection with the murder of Sweekhasebak Dal leader Azizur Rahman Musabbir.

Another suspect involved in the killing has also been identified.

The DB, however, has yet to officially acknowledge the detentions.

The detainees are alleged shooter Zinnat, his associate Riaz and Billal, two senior DB officials and two officers directly involved in the investigation told The Daily Star.

Musabbir, the former general secretary of the

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**"Through this [award], if we can make the smallest contribution in bringing a change, I think it would be one of our bti's greatest achievements.... The woman is also the unsung hero of every home."**

ARSHI HAIDER  
chairman of bti

**Classical and contemporary dancer Mubashira Kamal Era mesmerises the audience with a stunning solo performance at the bti-The Daily Star Stellar Women-2025 gala at the Banquet Hall of the Kurmitola Golf Club last night. Bottom, a panel discussion on "Transforming Society by Empowering Women" was held on the sidelines of the event, participated by Shaheen Anam, executive director of Manusher Jonno Foundation; Farah Kabir, country director of ActionAid Bangladesh; and Shaila Shahid, climate resilience and DRR specialist at Miyamoto International, USA.**

PHOTO: STAR



**"The Stellar Women Award is unique. It recognises professional women for their skills, intelligence, academic achievements, and personal courage."**

MAHFUZ ANAM, editor and publisher of The Daily Star

## Vengeance brings disaster

FROM PAGE 1  
of retaliation inevitably lead to dangerous consequences.

"The nation has seen the consequences of vengeance or retaliation on August 5, 2024. Even if there are differences of opinion, they must be bridged through discussions. Differences should not escalate into conflicts," he said.

He emphasised that the democratic process must continue at all national and local levels, including union parishad, municipal, and trade body elections.

Urging politicians to work for the country's independence and sovereignty, Tarique said lessons must be drawn from pivotal moments in history, including 1971, 1990 and August 5, 2024.

"If we keep these events in mind and work honestly for the country, I firmly believe we can lead the nation in the right direction," he said.

Calling on leaders of all parties and people from all walks of life to remain engaged, Tarique said that, as a political worker, he foresaw many difficult challenges ahead.

"We have different kinds of differences among us. We should be able to discuss these differences through dialogue," he added.

Referring to his recent travels to different parts of the country since returning, he said he sensed a deep yearning for direction and hope, particularly among the younger generation.

"Not only the new generation, but every generation expects guidance. People have many expectations from those involved in politics. Even if it is not possible to fulfil all expectations, if politicians work to protect the country's independence and sovereignty, it will be possible to lead the nation on the right path," he said.

Seeking constructive engagement from the media, Tarique called for criticism that is purposeful rather than performative.

"Criticism is necessary, but not criticism for the sake of criticism. We want criticism that helps solve the country's problems."

Outlining policy ideas, Tarique said the BNP plans to introduce a "farmer card" for around one and a half crore farmers.

"The huge number of people who

## Celebrating women

FROM PAGE 1  
the country's population, he highlighted women's contributions across society and how they have excelled in microcredit, social enterprise, business and other professional fields.

He also spoke about how the women in his newspaper are exceptional and resilient -- succeeding in a male-dominated environment.

Anam then thanked bti for joining hands in this venture.

The event also featured a panel discussion titled "Transforming Society by Empowering Women", joined by Shaheen Anam, executive director of Manusher Jonno Foundation; Farah Kabir, country director of ActionAid Bangladesh; and environmental lawyer Shaila Shahid, a WIN DRR award winner, as panelists.

Shaheen Anam said, "Women's economic empowerment does not happen in a vacuum.... Nearly 50 percent of our girls are married before the age of 18, which cuts short education and employment opportunities."

She also stressed the need for policy support such as childcare, safe hostels and security for working women, adding that unpaid care work must also be recognised.

"Empowerment starts from home.... In an environment where even demanding equal rights comes under attack, breaking stereotypes about what women can and cannot do

has become extremely challenging." She further said women need support at home and better organisation, adding, "There is not a single woman who is not working, whether through paid or unpaid work."

Referring to government data, Shaheen Anam said high levels of domestic violence show that women are still seen as less equal at home. "The only way to counter this is by showing evidence of what women do and what they are capable of.... Every woman has the potential to become a Stellar Woman if given the opportunity."

"Men should see women as partners, not adversaries, and women should see men as allies, not enemies. Both must work together for real change to happen."

Farah Kabir said women's empowerment must go beyond symbolism and address deep structural inequalities, stressing that women are not a homogeneous group.

"Empowerment is a process through which people who are denied voice and entitlements acquire the ability to make choices.... Every human being has agency, and that mindset has to change."

Highlighting the rise in violence against women, she said Bangladesh must "move from impunity to accountability", noting that justice remains far-fetched due to entrenched systemic failures.

Kabir also criticised the lack of

political commitment, pointing out that "less than four percent of election candidates are women", and questioned whether political actors are "really ready to be inclusive".

She stressed the need to engage men and boys, reform education systems and adopt an intersectional, life-cycle-based approach to empowerment. "You cannot have selective justice. It has to be universal human rights."

Shaila Shahid said women across Bangladesh are emerging as "invisible faces and forces of resilience" through grassroots leadership in climate and disaster management.

Sharing experiences from the Sundarbans and the Satkhira region, she said, "Women are playing key roles in water management groups, conservation committees and disaster preparedness, supported by government agencies and local communities.... Real transformation happens when women are organised and when we put our trust in women."

She noted that women's leadership is shifting power relations and influencing policy.

Calling on young women, she said, "You do not need permission to begin."

Women and Children's Affairs Adviser Sharmin S Murshid was invited as the chief guest for the programme but could not attend due to a sudden illness.

The gala concluded with the presentation of crests, cheques and scarves to the awardees.

## Iran protests rage on, crackdown fears grow

FROM PAGE 1  
Rasoulof and Jafar Panahi said.

In Tehran's Saadatabad district, people banged pots and chanted anti-government slogans including "death to Khamenei" as cars honked in support, a video verified by AFP showed.

Other images disseminated on social media and by Persian-language television channels outside Iran showed similarly large protests elsewhere in the capital, as well as in the eastern city of Mashhad, Tabriz in the north and the holy city of Qom.

In the western city of Hamedan, a man was shown waving a shah-era Iranian flag featuring the lion and the sun amid fires and people dancing.

In the Pounak district of northern Iran, people were shown dancing round a fire in the middle of a highway, while in the Vakilabad district of Mashhad, a city home to one of the holiest shrines in Shiite Islam, people marched down an avenue chanting "death to Khamenei".

Reza Pahlavi, the US based son

of Iran's ousted shah, hailed the "magnificent" turnout on Friday and urged Iranians to stage more targeted protests on Saturday and Sunday.

"Our goal is no longer just to take to the streets. The goal is to prepare to seize and hold city centres," Pahlavi said in a video message on social media.

Pahlavi, whose father Mohammad Reza Pahlavi was ousted by the 1979 revolution and died in 1980, added he was also "preparing to return to my homeland" at a time that he believed was "very near".

Authorities say several members of the security forces have been killed, and Khamenei in a defiant speech on Friday lashed out at "vandals" and accused the United States of instigating the protests.

On Thursday and Friday, an AFP journalist in Tehran saw streets deserted and plunged into darkness ahead of any protests.

On Valiasr avenue, one of Tehran's main streets, businesses were

shutting unusually early.

"The area is not safe," said a cafe manager as he prepared to close at around 4:00 pm.

An AFP reporter saw shop windows broken, as well as security forces deployed.

State TV on Saturday broadcast images of funerals for several members of the security forces killed in the protests, including a large gathering in the southern city of Shiraz.

It also aired images of buildings, including a mosque, on fire.

Iran's army said in a statement that it would "vigorously protect and safeguard national interests" against an "enemy seeking to disrupt order and peace".

National security council chief Ali Larijani said in comments broadcast late Friday that "we are in the middle of a war", with "these incidents being directed from outside".

The Norway-based Hengaw rights group said it had confirmed five

## Free speech key to democratic transition

Editors, senior journalists at meet-and-greet with Tarique

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Any political party that seeks democratic transformation must ensure an environment for free speech, editors and senior journalists said yesterday.

At a greetings exchange programme with BNP Chairman Tarique Rahman at a city hotel, they said journalists had endured torture and repression over the past 15 years under a fascist regime, which severely dented press freedom and made the working environment unsafe.

They added that the July uprising had created a new opportunity to safeguard freedom of speech in the country.

At the beginning of the event, Tarique greeted the editors and journalists.

In his speech, New Age Editor and Editors' Council President Nurul Kabir said that if Bangladesh is to achieve a democratic transformation of its future society and state, there must be an environment conducive to democratic journalism.

"In the past, many journalists faced lawsuits, attacks, and various kinds of injustice, and there was no proper environment to fight those cases legally."

Many who supported the previous regime now face cases and are in jail. They should be punished if found guilty, but that must be done through a proper judicial process. The government said it would look into the matter, but it has not kept its promise to ensure their legal rights, Kabir added.

"If we cannot stop the repetition of the injustices that occurred under the previous government, we will not be able to set an example of fair treatment of newspaper and media workers."

Shafik Rehman, founder editor of Jaijai Din, proposed introducing a pension system for journalists. He also suggested forming a committee to investigate the money theft from Bangladesh Bank and reorganising the law enforcement agencies.

"Recently, a survey showed that 70 percent of people in the country are interested in voting for the BNP. There is truth in this claim. But this interest must be turned into votes, and only then can the party come to power."

Manabzamin Editor in-Chief Matiur Rahman

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## 21-yr-old dies after taking poison over unpaid dues

### Family alleges provocation

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Syhet

A 21-year-old youth died after ingesting poison in Derai upazila of Sunamganj, with his family alleging that a creditor assaulted him and provoked him to take poison over unpaid dues.

The victim, Joy Mahapatra, son of Liton Mahapatra of Bhangadhar village in the upazila, fell seriously ill on Thursday evening and died at Sylhet MAG Osmani Medical College Hospital on Friday morning.

Emanul Haque Chowdhury, officer-in-charge of Derai Police Station, said, "We are investigating the incident. No case has been filed yet."

According to locals, Joy bought a mobile phone on instalments for Tk 5,500 about three months ago from Amirul Islam of Burhanpur village. About Tk 2,500 remained unpaid, leading to a dispute.

Joy's mother, Shelly Mahapatra, alleged assault and provocation by the creditor.

She said, "My son came home vomiting. When I asked him what happened, he said Amirul made him ingest something over the debt issue."

"After my son was hospitalised, I went to meet Amirul, and he told me that he gave my son poison and told him to die if he couldn't pay the weekly instalment of Tk 500."

## 'Our stance unchanged'

FROM PAGE 1  
decision on our own -- it is a government matter. Our earlier stance remains unchanged."

Asked whether the team would participate if the schedule could not be shifted from India, Bulbul said, "At this moment, I cannot say anything until we receive the letter."

He also ruled out reports of

Bangladesh quick Mustafizur Rahman receiving unofficial offers for a return in Indian Premier League, calling them "completely fake news."

According to Indian media outlet NDTV Sports, ICC chairman Jay Shah will meet officials of Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) in Vadodara today to resolve Bangladesh's reluctance to travel to India.

Kurdish men had been shot dead by security forces in the western city of Kermanshah on Thursday and another man, a former bodybuilding champion, killed in the northern city of Rasht on Friday.

Yesterday, the start of the working week in Iran, one man in Tehran said he was unable to check his work email.

"This is the price to pay before the victory of the people," he said.

US President Donald Trump again refused on Friday to rule out new military action against Iran after Washington backed and joined Israel's 12-day war against the Islamic republic in June.

"Iran's in big trouble. It looks to me that the people are taking over certain cities that nobody thought were really possible just a few weeks ago," Trump said.

Asked about his message to Iran's leaders, Trump said: "You better not start shooting because we'll start shooting too."

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India, Turkey,  
Egypt envoys  
meet Tarique

BSS, Dhaka

Three foreign envoys paid courtesy calls on BNP Chairman Tarique Rahman at his Gulshan office yesterday.

Indian High Commissioner Pranay Verma met Tarique Rahman around 5:10pm, said BNP media cell member Sayful Kabir Khan.

On the same day, Turkish Ambassador Ramis Sen paid a courtesy call on the BNP chairman in the evening. During the discussion, the two sides exchanged views on various issues of bilateral interest between Bangladesh and Turkey, Sayful said.

BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir and Standing Committee Member Salahuddin Ahmed were present at the meeting.

Egyptian Ambassador Omar Mohie Eldin Ahmed Fahmy also met Tarique. The courtesy meeting was held at 7:30pm, with Fakhrul and Salahuddin present.



Farmers separate chaff from Aman paddy using rakes during the Nabanna season, allowing cold winds to carry away the lighter husk while the grains collect below. Despite a good harvest, farmers are disappointed as wholesale prices remain low at Tk 1,100-1,200 per maund. The photo was taken at Katianangla village in Batiaghata, Khulna yesterday.

PHOTO: HABIBUR RAHMAN

Cold wave grips north,  
threatens livelihoods

Panchagarh records lowest  
temperature at 8.3°C



STAR REPORT

A persistent cold wave has gripped northern Bangladesh for several days, intensifying the suffering of poor and marginalised people and threatening their livelihoods.

Panchagarh recorded the country's lowest temperature at 8.3 degrees Celsius in the 24 hours ending at 9:00am yesterday.

The worst affected are people living in riverine char areas along the Brahmaputra, Teesta, Dharla, Dudhkhumar and Gangadhar rivers, where poverty, inadequate shelter and lack of warm clothing have compounded the impact of the cold. Many are burning straw and dry leaves to keep warm.

Farmer Ratin Chandra Das, 65, of Gangaduspur village in Rangpur Sadar upazila, said a biting cold has prevailed for nearly three weeks with no signs of easing. "The cold is gradually becoming more severe. If this continues, survival itself will become difficult," he asked.

Farmer Abed Ali, 50, from Shimulbari village, warned that prolonged cold conditions would seriously disrupt agricultural production.

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'A particular party being favoured ahead of polls'

Alleges Nahid

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

National Citizen Party (NCP) Convener Nahid Islam yesterday expressed concern about whether a level playing field exists ahead of the upcoming election.

He alleged that the government's special protocol for a particular political party is sending a troubling signal that could undermine electoral fairness.

He also claimed that false and negative reports about the NCP are being published in mainstream media.

Nahid made the remarks while speaking to journalists yesterday after

**Educating women key to a kinder world**  
Says Oxford University VC Irene Tracey at AUW commencement

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Educating daughters will create a kinder world, said Oxford University Vice-Chancellor Irene Tracey yesterday, speaking at the 12th commencement ceremony of the Asian University for Women (AUW).

She said the female graduates carry forward the skill of soft diplomacy -- the ability to appreciate differences and understand those not like them.

Human history has become more and more a race between education and catastrophe, she warned.

The programme, held at a hotel in Chattogram city, conferred honorary doctorate degrees on seven distinguished individuals and awarded degrees to 235 women from 11 countries.

"Among today's graduates, 51 have come from Afghanistan, a country where there is currently virtually no progress in women's education. We hope that one day they will return to

SEE PAGE 4 COL 6



A student receives a degree from the Asian University for Women Vice-Chancellor Dr Rubana Huq at the 12th commencement ceremony of AUW in the port city yesterday. A total of 235 graduates from 11 countries were awarded degrees at the event. AUW also conferred honorary doctorates on seven notable figures for their contributions to society.

PHOTO: STAR

'Level playing field vital for credible polls'

EU Election Observer Mission chief says EC, law enforcers must not be politicised

PORIMOL PALMA

A level playing field for the election is essential, and institutions, including the Election Commission and law enforcement agencies, must not be politicised, European Union Election Observer Mission (EOM) chief Ivars Ijabs has said.

"A level playing field is essential because democracy means each citizen is equal, implying that financial or gender inequalities should not play a role," he said in an exclusive interview with The Daily Star on Friday.

An 11-member core team of the EU EOM is already in Bangladesh and is meeting various stakeholders, including the EC, civil society groups, women and minority organisations, and political parties, to assess the overall election environment.

Eventually, 200 independent observers from the EU will come to Bangladesh to observe the polls and referendum scheduled for February 12.

**We will not be involved in the political game, but we will watch how a result is achieved and provide a report with recommendations afterwards, as we see this as a partnership with Bangladesh.**

IVARS IJABS

Asked why Bangladesh's election is important to the EU, Ijabs said, "In a turbulent world, we need stable, predictable, and democratic partners for investment and cooperation, and Bangladesh has proven it can be such a partner. This is why your election is so important to us."

Explaining the method of election observation, Ijabs compared the mission's role to that of spectators in a cricket match.

"We will not be involved in the political game, but we will watch how a result is achieved and provide a report with recommendations afterwards, as we see this as a partnership with Bangladesh," said Ijabs, a member of the European Parliament from Latvia and a political scientist.

Asked about the current election environment based on observations so far, Ijabs said most meetings had been positive, although the mission has only just begun its work and has not yet met political parties.

He said the election is particularly significant as it is taking place alongside a referendum for the first time after a mass uprising.

"We have met many active young people who stood behind the July uprising in 2024, and we will expand our daily contacts with local civil society," he said.

On the importance of a level playing field, Ijabs said it is fundamental because all citizens are equal in a democracy. While the influence of administrative and financial resources is an issue in many democratic countries, he said it was too early to make preliminary assessments of the situation in Bangladesh.

He said the EC should not be politicised, adding that the mission has already met the EC and will

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**Bring the culprits to book for attacks on minorities**  
32 citizens urge govt

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Thirty-two citizens yesterday condemned the killings of and attacks on members of minority communities ahead of the 13th national election.

In a statement, they demanded that those responsible be brought to justice and given exemplary punishment.

The signatories said, "Based on media reports, we are observing with deep anger and concern that in the weeks leading up to the 13th national election, there have been successive planned killings, including the murder of minority citizens, and attacks on their homes and arson incidents, creating a public perception that these acts are aimed at destabilising the country before the election."

They cited the killings of Dipu Das in Bhaluka of Mymensingh, Rana Pratap Bairagi in Jashore and Sarat Chakraborty Mani in Narsingdi.

The citizens noted that communal harmony is a long-standing tradition in Bangladesh and that hatred against any particular religion, community, or ethnic group is rare.

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## Christensen takes oath as US envoy to Bangladesh

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Brent Christensen, a career foreign service official, was sworn in as the new US Ambassador to Bangladesh on Friday.

The oath of office was administered to Christensen by Deputy Secretary of State Michael R. McFaul at the State Department's Foggy Bottom headquarters.

"A m b a s s a d o r Christensen brings deep experience and expertise in US-Bangladesh relations," the US Bureau of South and Central Asia said on X.

"We look forward to his leadership in strengthening our trade partnership and promoting US interests in Bangladesh."

Christensen now heads to Dhaka with over 20 years of experience working on US policy towards Bangladesh across his foreign service career, including a prior tour in Dhaka.

He is expected to join the US Embassy in Dhaka on Monday.

On X, it said the US Embassy in Dhaka is pleased to welcome Christensen as the newly sworn-in Ambassador to Bangladesh.

"I am thrilled to return to Bangladesh, a country I know so well. I am excited to lead a great team at Embassy Dhaka, Americans and locally employed staff alike, to enhance US-Bangladesh relations, advance President Trump's agenda, and work hard every day to make America safer, stronger, and more prosperous," the ambassador said.

## Land for Sale

Land for sale in Uttara, Sector:15. Size-16.24 katha, with RAJUK 22 feet road. NoMedia, call:01301320455



Risking accidents, people cross a railway line by ducking under a safety gate lowered for an approaching train at the Bhadra rail crossing in Rajshahi yesterday.

PHOTO: AZAHAR UDDIN

## Roadwork disrupts classes, puts students at risk

MINTU DESHWARA, Moulvibazar

Road development work in front of Gobardhanpur Government Primary School in Narendrapur village of Moulvibazar's Kamalganj upazila has been disrupting academic activities and posing health risks to students.

The ongoing road project from Kamalganj upazila to Adampur involves daily construction work, including burning fires to melt pitch, directly in front of the school's main gate. Thick black smoke, dust and ash from the work are spreading across the school premises and entering classrooms, corridors and teachers' rooms.

During visits to the area, pitch-melting operations were seen being carried out during school hours, with smoke billowing into classrooms.

Teachers said students frequently suffer from coughing, eye irritation, breathing difficulties and dizziness, while excessive noise from construction work is also affecting their concentration.

"Many students fall sick during classes. Even after closing doors and windows, smoke and dust still enter the classrooms. This is extremely harmful for young children," said a teacher.

Headteacher AKM Manjur Moul



Chowdhury said all construction equipment had been placed in front of the school, worsening the situation.

"We have informed the upazila education officer and the engineer, but no effective steps have been taken so far," he said.

Parent Mifta Mia described the situation as "inhumane" and demanded the immediate removal of construction materials from the front of the school, calling for urgent measures to ensure a safe learning environment.

Upazila Primary Assistant Education

Officer Soma Bhattacharjee said the issue had been reported to higher authorities for immediate action.

Upazila Engineer Saiful Azam said the space was being used temporarily due to a lack of open areas along the road. He added that the school was reportedly closed earlier and that the project was now nearing completion, expected to finish within a week.

Kamalganj UNO Md Asaduzzaman said the administration was looking into the matter and taking necessary steps.

## Level playing field

FROM PAGE 3

observe processes such as voter registration and appeal procedures.

On the role of law enforcement agencies, Ijabs said electoral violence is a widespread concern in Bangladesh's political culture. He said the mission's legal analysts are examining the balance between maintaining law and order and political neutrality, an issue that will become increasingly relevant as election day approaches.

Asked about the EU EOM's perspective on the banning of the Awami League and its inability to take part in the polls, Ijabs said issues of transitional justice are painful for many countries. "We are here to look at how to make the current process participatory, credible, and trusted by citizens, rather than focusing on past legal proceedings," he said.

On recent violent protests and killings that have created fear among the public, he said such violence is extremely worrying, as fear may discourage people from turning out to vote.

"We will pay attention to the opportunities for all groups -- including women and ethnic or regional minorities -- to participate in the polls," he said.

He suggested that law enforcement agencies maintain law and order but refrain from involvement in the political process on behalf of any particular group.

"This is a crucial

question we will pay a lot of attention to," he added.

On addressing misinformation and disinformation surrounding the elections, Ijabs said the issue has been debated for years in the European Parliament.

"The problem is that policy regulations always lag behind technological progress," he said, suggesting greater engagement with NGOs and fact-checking organisations to counter disinformation.

He also said governments should maintain direct communication with social media platforms to ensure regulation.

On the role of free media, Ijabs said the EU EOM is concerned that political unrest is endangering media freedom, particularly following the attack on The Daily Star and Prothom Alo office buildings.

Asked if he had any message for voters, he said, "Make an informed choice and do not be afraid to participate."

Democracy is a learning process. You must take previous decisions into account and learn from mistakes to grow and become fit for these turbulent times."

## PRAYER TIMING

JANUARY 11

Faz Zohr Asr Maghrib Esha

AZAN 5:30 12:45 4:00 5:36 7:00

JAMAT 6:05 1:15 4:15 5:40 7:30

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

## Educating women key to a kinder

FROM PAGE 3

# Untreated medical waste raises health risks in Ctg

ARUN BIKASH DEY, *Chattogram*

Medical wastes from different hospitals and diagnostic centres across Chattogram city are being routinely collected and disposed of without proper segregation, raising serious public health risks, including the spread of infectious diseases.

Standard biomedical waste disposal protocols require different coloured bins for specific waste types: red bins for recyclable contaminated waste such as syringes without needles; yellow bins for soiled waste like bandages and cotton swabs; white puncture-proof containers for sharp objects including needles and blades; blue bins for glassware; and black bins for non-biomedical waste.

However, most health centres in the port city are mixing all waste before disposal, as witnessed by this correspondent during visits to several private hospitals in Panchlaish, Mehedibagh and Surson Road areas.

Contacted, Dr Shakeel Ahmed, a public health expert and retired professor of the Bangladesh Institute of Tropical



directly exposing patients and the public.

According to Dr Jahangir Alam, civil surgeon of Chattogram, there are 290 registered private medical facilities in the city, including 92 hospitals and 198 diagnostic centres, alongside two government hospitals and 14 upazila health complexes.

Sources said a number of unregistered clinics and diagnostic centres have also mushroomed in the city, evading regulatory oversight.

Around three tonnes of medical waste are generated in Chattogram city every day, according to sources at the Chattogram City Corporation. However, there is no study on the volume of medical waste produced across the 15 upazilas of the district.

Only one company, Nagar Seba, currently operates in the city to collect and dispose of medical waste from hospitals, clinics and laboratories. No such service operates at the upazila level.

Pranab Sharma, deputy chief conservancy officer of the city corporation, said the company uses an incinerator set up by the corporation under a JICA project at the Halishahar landfill to dispose of medical waste.

However, officials of Nagar Seba said the company is collecting and disposing of only half of the hazardous waste generated in the city, around 1.5 tonnes daily.

The remaining medical waste is reportedly being collected by city corporation workers along with general waste, meaning half of the city's infectious waste is being improperly disposed of, further heightening public health risks.

During a recent visit to the city

corporation landfill at the Halishahar Anandabazar area, conservancy workers were seen dumping waste, while some people were collecting plastic materials from the landfill.

The incineration plant beside the landfill was not operational when this correspondent visited the site around noon. Medical waste in polythene bags was seen piled up and scattered along the road in front of the plant, with no visible signs of waste segregation.

Shimul Kanti Dey, foreman of the plant, said it usually operates for only three hours from 9:00am daily to avoid technical glitches.

"We can burn 750kg of medical waste a day in three hours, but around 1.5 tonnes of medical waste are brought in daily. The rest of the waste is kept on the ground in plastic bags," he said.

Asked about waste segregation, he said that earlier, medical waste used to be delivered after segregation at the source, but over the past eight months, waste has been brought in without any sorting.

"We have to burn all waste together in the plant at the highest 820 degrees Fahrenheit temperature," he added.

Contacted, Md Bokhtair, a director of Nagar Seba, said 150 of the 290 registered medical entities have signed memorandums of understanding with the company for waste collection and disposal.

"We collect 1.5 tonnes of medical waste daily. We realise monthly fees ranging from Tk 1,500 to Tk 20,000 from each entity for the service," he said.

He added that some public hospitals, including Chattogram General Hospital

and City Corporation Memon Hospital, have not signed MoUs with the company.

Asked about the issue, Dr Ekram Hossain, acting director of Chattogram General Hospital, confirmed that the hospital's waste is handed over to city corporation conservancy workers instead of a specialised service, adding that he would need to check records to explain the absence of an MoU.

Contacted, Dr Imam Hossain Rana, chief health officer of the city corporation, said he was unaware whether Memon Hospital had signed an MoU with Nagar Seba. "I would look into the matter," he said.

Mohammad Ismail, operations manager of Nagar Seba, said most facilities are ignoring the responsibility of waste segregation at the source.

"Waste segregation should be done at the source. However, only three hospitals -- Parkview, Evercare and Imperial -- provide medical waste after segregation. The rest of the hospitals and diagnostic centres provide waste without sorting," he said.

Dr Shakeel Ahmed stressed that waste segregation must begin at hospitals and diagnostic centres and called for greater accountability.

"If any hospital or diagnostic centre does not segregate medical waste at source, the city corporation or the collecting organisations should file complaints with health authorities against them," he said.

Contacted, Brig Gen Taslim Uddin, director of Chattogram Medical College Hospital, said medical waste segregation rules are supposed to be followed in every ward.

"I would look into whether the rules are being followed properly," he added.

## Rohingya gang leader killed in gun attack at Teknaf camp

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Cox's Bazar*

A suspected armed robber was killed in a gun attack by a rival gang at the Nayapara Registered Rohingya Camp in Teknaf early yesterday.

The deceased was identified as Nur Kamal, 25, leader of a Rohingya gang allegedly involved in criminal activities inside the camp. He was shot and stabbed during an attack following a long-standing rivalry over territorial control, according to law enforcers.

Additional Deputy Inspector General Md Kausar Sikder, commanding officer of the 16 Armed Police Battalion, said members of the Bangladeshi Khalique gang carried out the attack, triggering an exchange of gunfire in the area.

At one stage, Nur Kamal sustained fatal injuries and later died at an NGO-run hospital inside the camp.

Both groups have long been involved in various criminal activities, including robbery and drug trafficking, he added.

Teknaf Model Police Station Officer-in-Charge Md Saiful Islam said police recovered Nur Kamal's body from the camp yesterday morning.

Police records show Nur Kamal was accused in at least 11 cases, including murder, robbery, abduction, and drug related offenses.

## Annual urs at HC shrine held on a limited scale



DU CORRESPONDENT

The annual two-day urs at the shrine of Hazrat Shah Khaza Sharuddin Chishti located at the High Court premises in Dhaka was held on a limited scale this year as the traditional large gathering was postponed.

According to devotees, a committee comprising High Court judges oversees the urs, which usually draws followers from across the country, each year. Traditionally, the urs is observed with rituals, including full recitation of the Quran, zikr, dua, sermons, musical sessions, and food distribution among devotees. Musical events are usually held at the HC field adjacent to the shrine.

Talking to this correspondent, urs organisers said due to the upcoming national election and ongoing cases at the International Crimes Tribunal, the committee did not permit the programme to be held on a large scale.

This year, however, only the mandatory rituals were carried out in a limited capacity.

Law enforcers barricaded the HC gate on Friday, preventing followers from entering the shrine, which led to an altercation in front of the gate.

Ramna Zone Deputy Commissioner Masud Alam told The Daily Star that the decision to restrict entry was taken by the organising committee.

"We just did our job. When the followers were denied entry, they set fire in front of the High Court gate and staged a protest," he said.

## Man stabbed to death while trying to prevent dispute

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Patuakhali*

A man was stabbed to death while trying to stop a land dispute between two brothers in Barguna's Amtali upazila yesterday.

The victim, Jahirul Islam Sardar, 40, a cousin of the feuding brothers from Taktabunia village, was attacked around noon in front of their houses.

Police detained Mansur Sardar, 65, one of the brothers, and recovered the knife used in the killing.

According to police and locals, Mansur and his younger brother, Farid Sardar, had a dispute over 26 decimals of land for a long time. Several arbitration meetings failed to resolve the conflict.

Amal Police Station Officer-in-Charge Md Jahangir Hossain said the dispute escalated yesterday when Mansur allegedly chased Farid with a knife. Jahirul intervened to stop the attack but was stabbed.

Locals rushed him to Amal Upazila Health Complex, where doctors declared him dead.

Local arbitrator Md Limon Hawlader said the dispute had persisted for decades despite repeated mediation.

Jahirul's wife and mother demanded justice. The body was sent to Barguna General Hospital morgue for autopsy, and police were preparing to file a case, the OC said.



- Hospitals, diagnostics mixing medical waste
- Three tonnes of medical waste generated daily; half disposed of improperly
- Only three hospitals segregate waste at source
- Nagar Seba incinerates 750kg daily; backlog remains
- Liquid, hazardous waste spilling near CMCH
- Experts warn of severe health risks

and Infectious Diseases, said improper segregation of medical waste poses serious health risks.

"If medical wastes are collected and disposed of without segregation, there might be a risk of contamination of diseases like Hepatitis B, C and HIV among both the collectors and common people," he said.

At Chattogram Medical College Hospital, the region's largest healthcare facility, liquid waste was seen trickling down from unsegregated heaps of garbage onto the road and spreading towards the hospital's emergency department,

## Mob rule, shrinking freedom

FROM PAGE 3  
members of civil society, their faces remain the same once they sit in the chair of power.

He said threats to free expression are no longer limited to formal state control. "Recently, we have seen supporters of private groups or political parties directly targeting media and cultural institutions with violence," he added.

Zillur criticised the state's inaction during arson attacks on the offices of Prothom Alo and The Daily Star, calling them among the most shameful incidents in recent history.

He also cited the demolition of the historic Dhamondi 32 residence as an example of state-enforced mob rule.

Law Adviser Prof Asif Nazrul said the interim government is under severe strain, revealing that three to four advisers had considered resigning due to what he described as unjust attacks, obscene abuse, and death threats.

He said they stayed on after Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus warned that even one resignation would weaken the entire administration.

Defending the government against what he termed as "heartless" criticism, Asif said it is currently the only entity without freedom of speech.

TIB Executive Director Iftekharuzzaman said mob culture did not arise on its own but was enabled by the state. He said extortion, tender manipulation and land grabbing have continued since the uprising,

with political parties still relying on "money, muscle and religion".

He also criticised amendments to the Human Rights Commission ordinance, saying a quietly added provision in December weakened the body.

Human rights activist Sara Hossain urged political parties to stop filing proxy defamation cases to silence critics. "Public figures must face criticism. Cases should not be filed unless there is a real threat to life," she said.

She called for urgent reform of colonial-era laws such as the Contempt of Court Act, the Sedition Act and provisions on hurting religious sentiments.

Sara also called on the media to speak out more strongly for colleagues still in detention.

Senior journalist Muktidur Rashid Romeo said the country has moved from "freedom of expression" to "freedom of the mob".

He said the EU expects the polls to be free, fair, and competitive. The EU also wants all stakeholders to accept the results to ensure a smooth democratic transition, he added.

He said the EU delegation also assured the NCP of its cooperation during the meeting.

On the issue of a level playing field, Nahid said there is no confidence or consensus among political parties, including the NCP, that such an environment currently exists in the country. "We believe that by providing special facilities and government protocol to a particular political party, a form of signalling is taking place that may obstruct a

level playing field," he said.

He also raised concerns about the media's role, alleging a growing tendency to lean towards one side.

"Various negative and false reports about the NCP are appearing in the mainstream media. A few outlets are deliberately targeting us," he said.

Calling for equal treatment in both administration and media, Nahid said these concerns have been repeatedly raised with the Election Commission and will continue to be conveyed.

He added that the commission would also be informed about obstacles the party is facing at the field level.

Nahid further said the EC should take firm action against loan defaulters, noting that nominations of several loan defaulters were

initially declared valid.

He also alleged violations of election laws through poster displays and other campaign activities.

On security, he said fear and insecurity persist despite government initiatives and the deployment of security personnel. "The fear remains, especially as the killers of Sharif Osman Hadi and Farhad have not yet been arrested," he said.

Regarding seat-sharing, Nahid said the NCP's position would be clear within the next one or two days.

He said the Jamaat-NCP alliance is ahead in election preparations and has already begun campaigning in favour of a referendum.

Once the seat-sharing arrangement is finalised, he said, no major challenges would remain ahead of the election.

Kori; Iftekharuzzaman, executive director of Transparency International Bangladesh; Rasheda K Chowdhury, executive director of Campaign for Popular Education; ZI Khan Panna, senior Supreme Court lawyer; Shaheen Anam, executive director of Manusher Jonno Foundation; Shamsul Huda, executive director of ALRD; and Md Nur Khan, rights activist.

The other signatories include Anu Muhammad, economist and former Jahangirnagar University professor; Sultana Kamal, rights activist; Khushi Kabir, coordinator of Nijera

special measures by the interim government to protect minority homes, shops and all places of worship, including temples and churches; the issuance of special directives and increased monitoring to ensure the security of minorities and protect communal harmony; and joint initiatives by all mainstream political parties to resist such incidents by mobilising leaders, activists and supporters.

The other signatories are: Dhaka University professors Samina Lutfah and Sumaiya Khayer, Robayed Ferdous and Zobaida Nasreen; DU associate professor Tasnim Siraj Mabbub; senior Supreme Court lawyers Subrata Chowdhury and Tabarak Hossain; visiting professor at the London School of Economics and Political Science Swapan Adnan; BRAC University professor Ferdous Azim; Manindra Kumar Nath, acting general secretary of Bangladesh Hindu Buddhist Christian Oikya Parishad, writer and researcher Pavel Partha; Saleh Ahmed, general secretary of Sammilito Samajik Andolon; lawyer and human rights activist Parvez Hashem; Rezaul Karim Chowdhury, executive director of Coast Trust; Shah-e Mobin Jinnah, executive director of CDA; Zakir Hossain, chief executive of Nagonik Uddoyog; Saidur Rahman, chief executive of Human Rights Cultural Foundation; rights activists Sayeed Ahmed and Dipayan Khisa; social worker Joba Talukder; researcher Ishita Dastagir; indigenous rights activist Meinthin Promila; and Hana Shams Ahmed, a PhD researcher at York University, Canada.

## A particular party being favoured

FROM PAGE 3

a meeting with an election observation delegation led by European Union Chief Election Observer Ivars Ijabs.

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Children gather next to damaged buildings in Jabalia, in the northern Gaza Strip, yesterday. Since October 10, a fragile US-sponsored truce in Gaza has largely halted the fighting between Israeli forces and Hamas, but both sides have alleged frequent violations.

PHOTO: AFP

## TRUMP'S IMMIGRATION CRACKDOWN Anger grows as ICE hardens tactics

REUTERS, Washington

US President Donald Trump's sweeping increasingly is sparking violent confrontations with both migrants and US citizens, a development grimly underscored by an ICE officer's fatal shooting of a Minneapolis woman this week.

Under Trump's orders to ramp up deportations, masked immigration officers have surged into Democratic-led cities, sprayed tear gas in residential streets, tackled people in parking lots and pointed guns at bystanders trying to film them.

A federal officer in Minneapolis dragged a woman through a snowy street in an incident last month that the city's police chief called an "egregious disregard for human dignity."

These contentious encounters, which have come amid a push to quickly recruit and train thousands of new officers, have stemmed from a dramatic shift in the approach to immigration enforcement, according to current and former immigration officials.

The White House demanded a steep increase in immigration arrests in late May, leading officers to change tactics, embracing showy sweeps over more targeted arrests of people with serious criminal records. Since then, officers have been met with more public backlash and resistance, at times creating tense standoffs.

"It's this high-visibility, high-footprint, high-contact form of operation that invites danger," said former ICE official Scott

Shuchart, who served in Joe Biden's administration.

Trump, Vice President JD Vance and Homeland Security Secretary Kristi Noem have all defended the ICE officer who killed Renee Good, the 37-year-old mother of three, and portrayed her as an agitator trying to disrupt enforcement operations.

Within hours of the incident, Noem alleged that Good tried to ram the officer with her vehicle in

The ICE officer involved in the fatal shooting, Jonathan Ross, fired the first of three shots as Good's vehicle moved past him, a Reuters analysis of the available videos showed.

The administration is preparing to spend tens of billions of taxpayer dollars to hire more immigration officers and intensify its operations, raising concerns such violence could grow in the coming year. Several current and

whether that many were actually fully hired and working.

Federal immigration officers have shot people in 16 incidents since Trump intensified his crackdown in June, according to The Trace, a non-profit news outlet that tracks gun violence.

In some of the cases, immigration officials said agents were under threat due to vehicles being used as weapons, though video evidence and judges later raised questions about those claims.

The Supreme Court in September said the Trump administration could stop people in US cities for reasonable suspicion of violating immigration laws based on factors such as having brown skin or speaking Spanish, a position defended by Justice Brett Kavanaugh in a concurrence at the time.

Opponents of Trump's aggressive enforcement say such "Kavanaugh stops" by ICE and Border Patrol have inflamed tensions.

Darius Reeves, a former ICE field office director who retired in 2025, said the Trump administration's confrontational approach is putting officers at risk and increasing the likelihood of violent interactions.

Reeves, who spent more than two decades at the agency, said ICE historically tried to minimize its public presence and operate in a more targeted manner.

"We should not be flooding these neighborhoods and antagonizing people," Reeves said. "This is not going to go well."



an act of "domestic terrorism."

In response to a Reuters request for comment, White House spokeswoman Abigail Jackson accused Democrats and news outlets of demonising ICE officers and encouraging backlash.

"The Democrats' lies have directly fuelled their supporters to harass and impede law enforcement, which is the cause of any tensions and puts officers at risk," Jackson said.

former ICE officers, speaking on the condition of anonymity to speak openly about sensitive matters, expressed concerns that ICE could bring on less-qualified candidates with its accelerated hiring push.

The US Department of Homeland Security said earlier this month that it had hired 12,000 new ICE officers on top of an existing force of 10,000, although some questioned

## UKRAINE STRIKES Nearly 6m without power, heat, or water in Russia

REUTERS, Moscow

The governor of Russia's Belgorod region, which borders Ukraine, said on Saturday that 600,000 residents were without electricity, heating and water after a Ukrainian missile strike.

In a statement posted on Telegram, Vyacheslav Gladkov said that work was underway to restore supplies, but that the situation was "extremely challenging".

Footage filmed by Reuters in Belgorod

city showed street lights extinguished.

Belgorod region, which adjoins Ukraine's Kharkiv region and had a pre-war population of 1.5 million, has come under regular attack from Kyiv's forces since Russia ordered tens of thousands of troops into Ukraine in February 2022.

Russia has frequently bombarded Ukraine's power infrastructure, causing rolling daily blackouts, and has also targeted heating systems this winter.



## 1 dead, 7 missing after migrant boat sinks off Turkey

AFP, Istanbul

One person died and seven others were missing Saturday after a migrant boat sank in the Aegean Sea off the coast of Turkey, the Turkish coast guard said.

Thirty-seven passengers on a rubber dinghy which took on water before dawn off the western city of Dikili, north of Izmir, were rescued alive, the coast guard stated.

Dikili, a small seaside resort, faces the Greek island of Lesbos, some 20 kilometres (12 miles) away.

"Search operations ... are continuing to find the seven missing irregular migrants," the coast guard said.

Shipwrecks are common for perilous crossings to the Greek islands, which are a gateway to the European Union.

Nearly 1,900 migrants either disappeared or were found drowned in the Mediterranean in 2025, according to the International Organization for Migration.

## Netanyahu hopes to 'taper' Israel off US military aid in next decade

REUTERS, Jerusalem

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said in an interview published on Friday that he hopes to "taper off" Israeli dependence on US military aid in the next decade.

Netanyahu has said Israel should not be reliant on foreign military aid but has stopped short of declaring a firm timeline for when Israel would be fully independent from Washington.

"I want to taper off the military within the next 10 years," Netanyahu told the Economist. Asked if that meant a tapering "down to zero," he said: "Yes."

Netanyahu said he told President Donald Trump during a recent visit that Israel "very deeply" appreciates "the military aid that America has given us over the years, but here too we've come of age and we've developed incredible capacities."

In December, Netanyahu said Israel would spend 350 billion shekels (\$10 billion) on developing an independent arms industry to reduce dependency on other countries.

In 2016, the US and Israeli governments signed a memorandum of understanding for the 10 years through September 2028 that provides \$38 billion in military aid, \$33 billion in grants to buy military equipment and \$5 billion for missile defence systems.



## South Africa defends naval drills with Iran, Russia

AFP, Simon's Town

expanded to include Egypt, Ethiopia, Iran, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates and, more recently, Indonesia.

China and Iran deployed destroyer warships, while Russia and the United Arab Emirates sent corvette vessels. Host South Africa dispatched a frigate.

Indonesia, Ethiopia and Brazil joined as observers.

"In an increasingly complex maritime environment, cooperation such as this is not an option, it is essential," said Thamaha.

The exercises were to "ensure the safety of shipping lanes and maritime economic activities," he said.

Previously known as Exercise Mosi, the drills were initially scheduled for last November but postponed due to a clash with the G20 summit in Johannesburg, boycotted by the United States.

Washington has accused South Africa and the BRICS bloc of "anti-American" policies and warned members they could face an additional 10 percent tariff on top of existing duties already applied worldwide.

## Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh

Ministry of Home Affairs  
Office of the Directorate of Logistics  
Bangladesh Coast Guard Headquarters  
Agargaon Administrative Area, Sher-e-Bangla Nagar, Dhaka-1207

### Invitation for Tender

Director Logistics e-GP Invitation No. 44.08.2680.060.50.004.26.35

Date: 08 January 2026

### e-Tender Notice

e-Tender is invited in the National e-GP System Portal (<https://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) for the following procurement

Ser	Tender ID	Package name	Method	Date & time		
				Publication	Last selling	Closing and opening
1.	1209124	1. Purchase of Clothing Item Towel (Sailor) 2. Sample Submission: Bidder must submit 03 in number sample before tender opening time. No sample will be accepted after tender opening time. Without submitting sample bidder will be considered as "Non-Responsive" Provided sample is non-returnable & will be used for test.	OTM	11-01-2026 09:30am	25-01-2026 14:30pm	26-01-2026 12:30pm

This is an online tender, where only e-Tenders will be accepted in e-GP Portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted. To submit e-Tender, please register on e-GP System (<https://www.eprocure.gov.bd>). For more details, please contact support desk contact numbers.

Documents can be downloaded till deadline of Tender/Application/Proposal submission.

Md. Shazzad Hossain Shakil  
Lt Commander BN  
Asst. Director Logistics (Stores)  
Bangladesh Coast Guard

## 'American? NO!'

Says Greenland

AFP, Nuuk

Greenland's political parties said they did not want to be under Washington as US President Donald Trump again suggested using force to seize the mineral-rich Danish autonomous territory, raising concern worldwide.

The statement late Friday came after Trump repeated that Washington was "going to do something on Greenland, whether they like it or not".

European capitals have been scrambling to come up with a coordinated response after the White House said this week that Trump wanted to buy Greenland and refused to rule out military action.

"We don't want to be Americans, we don't want to be Danish, we want to be Greenlanders," the leaders of five parties in Greenland's parliament said in a joint statement.

"The future of Greenland must be decided by Greenlanders."

"No other country can meddle in this. We must decide our country's future ourselves — without pressure to make a hasty decision, without procrastination, and without interference from other countries," they underscored.

Julius Nielsen, a 48-year-old fisherman in the capital Nuuk, told AFP: "American, no! We were a colony for so many years. We're not ready to be a colony again, to be colonised".

A Danish colony until 1953, Greenland gained home rule 26 years later and is contemplating eventually loosening its ties with Denmark.

The coalition currently in power is not in favour of a hasty independence. The only opposition party, Naleraq, which won 24.5 percent of the vote in the 2025 legislative elections, wants to cut ties as quickly as possible but it is also a signatory of the joint declaration.

Greenland has attracted international attention in recent years for its vast natural resources including rare earth minerals and estimates that it could possess huge oil and gas reserves.

A flurry of diplomacy is under way as Europeans try to head off a crisis while at the same time avoiding the wrath of Trump, who is nearing the end of his first year back in power.

Trump had offered to buy Greenland in 2019 during his first presidential term but was rebuffed.

The head of Nato's forces in Europe, US General Alexus Grynkevich, said Friday the military alliance was far from being in "a crisis", following Trump's threats.



Residents of the Sheikh Maqsud neighbourhood, react as they are escorted out of the harms way by the members of Syrian government security forces, in Aleppo yesterday. Syria's army said it had completed a "security sweep" of a neighbourhood in Aleppo where it clashed with Kurdish forces, who denied losing control of the area after defying calls to surrender.

PHOTO: AFP

## 'US needs to own Greenland'

Trump says if US doesn't, China Russia will occupy it; Danish PM says invasion would end Nato

AGENCIES

US President Donald Trump on Friday again suggested the use of force to seize Greenland as he brushed aside Denmark's sovereignty over the autonomous Arctic island.

"We are going to do something on Greenland, whether they like it or not," Trump said at a White House meeting with oil executives looking to benefit in Venezuela, where the United States last week overthrew the president.

"I would like to make a deal, you know, the easy way. But if we don't do it the easy way, we're going to do it the hard way," Trump said when asked of Greenland.

Trump says controlling the mineral-rich island is crucial for US national security given the rising military activity of Russia and China in the Arctic.

"We're not going to have Russia or China occupy Greenland. That's what they're going to do if we don't."

US already has a military presence on the island under a 1951 agreement. The island of 57,000 people is an autonomous territory of the Kingdom of Denmark.

Both China and Russia have increased military activity in the Arctic region in recent years, but neither has laid any claim to the vast icy island.

"You defend ownership. You don't defend leases. And we'll have to defend Greenland. If we don't do it, China or Russia will," Trump said.



Trump and White House officials have been discussing various plans to bring Greenland under US control, including potential use of the US military and lump sum payments to Greenlanders as part of a bid to convince them to secede from Denmark and potentially join the US.

Danish Prime Minister Mette Frederiksen has warned that an invasion of Greenland would end "everything," meaning Nato and the post-World War II security structure.

Trump made light of the concerns of Denmark, a steadfast US ally that joined the United States in the controversial 2003 invasion of Iraq.

"I'm a fan of Denmark, too, I have to tell you. And you know, they've been very nice to me," Trump said.

"But you know, the fact that they had a boat land there 500 years ago doesn't mean that they own the land."

Secretary of State Marco Rubio is due to meet next week with Denmark's foreign minister and representatives from Greenland.

Leaders in Copenhagen and throughout Europe have reacted with disdain in recent days to comments by Trump and other White House officials asserting their right to Greenland. The US and Denmark are Nato allies bound by a mutual defense agreement.

On Tuesday, France, Germany, Italy, Poland, Spain, Britain and Denmark issued a joint statement, saying only Greenland and Denmark can decide matters regarding their relations.



People take part in a vigil after a US immigration agent shot and killed 37-year-old Renee Nicole Good in her car in Minneapolis, in New York City, US, on Friday.

PHOTO: REUTERS

## US INTERVENTION

### Colombia's rebel leader calls for guerrilla unity

REUTERS, Bogota

The head of the largest dissident branch of the former Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) guerrilla group called on other rebel groups to come together to fight US interventionism in the region, in a video message confirmed by the group as authentic on Friday.

The call from leader Nestor Gregorio Vera follows the US incursion into neighboring Venezuela, which resulted in the capture of President Nicolas Maduro.

"The shadow of the interventionist eagle looms over everyone equally. We urge you to put aside these differences," Vera said in a video in which he appeared dressed in camouflage.

Colombian President Gustavo Petro - a former guerrilla who vowed to bring peace to the country after more than six decades of internal armed conflict - is set to meet US President Donald Trump in Washington in February.

The planned meeting comes days after Trump threatened Colombia with military action. Trump has repeatedly accused the administration of Petro, without evidence, of enabling a steady flow of cocaine into the US, imposing sanctions on the Colombian leader in October.

"Destiny is calling us to unite. We are not scattered forces, we are heirs to the same cause. Let us weave unity through action and forge the great insurgent bloc that will push back the enemies of the greater homeland," Vera added in the video addressed to other rebel groups.

## DENMARK'S GREENLAND DILEMMA

### Defending a territory already on its way out

REUTERS, Copenhagen

When US Secretary of State Marco Rubio meets his Danish and Greenlandic counterparts next week, Denmark will be defending a territory that has been moving steadily away from it and towards independence since 1979.

President Donald Trump's threats to seize Greenland have triggered a wave of European solidarity with Denmark. But the crisis has exposed an uncomfortable reality - Denmark is rallying support to protect a territory whose population wants independence, and whose largest opposition party now wants to bypass Copenhagen and negotiate directly with Washington.

"Denmark risks exhausting its foreign policy capital to secure Greenland, only to watch it walk away afterwards," said Mikkel Vedby Rasmussen, a political science professor at University of Copenhagen.

Denmark cannot let Greenland go without losing its geopolitical relevance in the Arctic territory, strategically located between Europe and North America and a critical site for the US ballistic missile defence system.

Yet it may ultimately have nothing to show for its efforts if Greenlanders choose independence -- or strike their own deal with Washington.

The stakes extend beyond Denmark's national interests. European allies have rallied behind Denmark not just out of solidarity, but because giving up Greenland would set a dangerous precedent



that could embolden other powers to pursue territorial claims against smaller nations, upending the post-1945 world order.

Denmark's foreign ministry declined to comment, but referred to joint remarks by Danish Prime Minister Mette Frederiksen and Greenlandic Prime Minister Jens-Frederik Nielsen on December 22.

"National borders and the sovereignty of states are rooted in international law," the two leaders said. "They are fundamental principles. You cannot annex another country ... Greenland belongs to the Greenlanders."

For now, the Trump administration says all options are on the table, including buying the territory or taking it by force.

Copenhagen professor Rasmussen said any discussion of whether holding on to Greenland is worth the cost has been drowned

out by outrage at Trump's threats. "It is not part of the political debate in Denmark. I fear we have gone into patriotic overdrive," he said.

During the Cold War, Greenland's strategic location gave Denmark outsized influence in Washington and allowed it to maintain lower defence spending than would otherwise be expected of a Nato ally.

This became known as "the Greenland Card", according to a 2017 report by the University of Copenhagen's Centre for Military Studies.

But Greenland's aspirations for self-determination have been brewing since the former colony got greater autonomy and its own parliament in 1979. A 2009 agreement explicitly recognised Greenlanders' right to independence if they choose.

Copenhagen provides an annual block grant of roughly 4.3 billion Danish crowns (\$610 million) to Greenland's economy, which is near stagnation with GDP growth of just 0.2 percent in 2025.

Prime Minister Frederiksen faces a difficult balancing act, said Serafima Andreeva, researcher at Oslo-based Fridtjof Nansen Institute.

For now, Denmark has little choice but to stand firm to maintain its diplomatic credibility, but in doing so risks the relationship with the United States at a time "when Russia is an accelerating threat and being on the US's bad side is no good for anyone in the West".

## Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh

Ministry of Public Administration

Bangladesh Secretariat, Dhaka

[www.mopa.gov.bd](http://www.mopa.gov.bd)

No: 05.00.0000.113.07.072.2025-25

Date : 08-1-2026

### e-Tender Notice No. 5/2025-26

Ministry of Public Administration of Bangladesh invites the Flowing tender in the National e-GP Portal:

Si	Tender Id	Name of Supply	Publishing Date and Time	Closing Date and Time
1	1209143	Electrical Equipment	11 January 2026 & 10.00	26 January 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. To submit e-tender, registration in the National e-GP portal ([www.eprocure.gov.bd](http://www.eprocure.gov.bd)) is required. The fees for downloading the e-Tender document from the National e-GP System Portal should be deposited on-line through any registered Bank.

Further Information and Guidelines are Available in the National e-GP System Portal and e-GP Helpdesk ([helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd](mailto:helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd)).

Md. Saifuddin Gias  
Senior Assistant Secretary  
Ministry of Public Administration  
Bangladesh Secretariat, Dhaka.  
Phone: 2226641500

GD-71

## Young voters will decide the winner

Parties must commit to a better future for the youth post-polls

There is little doubt that young voters are a decisive demographic force, particularly in the context of the upcoming general election that people expect to be free and fair. With 5.56 crore out of 12.76 crore voters—about 44 percent—being between 18 and 37 years of age, young people make up nearly half of the electorate. They could, therefore, end up deciding the outcome of the February 12 election, making it all the more crucial for political parties to connect with their thought processes and expectations from a future government.

Unlike the last three elections, widely regarded as farcical or non-competitive, this election follows the youth-led uprising of July 2024 and will be conducted under a non-political interim government committed to reform, justice for crimes committed under the Awami League regime, and credible polls. Having been denied meaningful voting opportunities in 2014, 2018, and 2024 due to intimidation and rigging, young voters are participating seriously for the first time in many years. The apathy of the past has been transformed into a determination to reclaim their right to vote, as recent surveys have also demonstrated. One survey by the Bangladesh Youth Leadership Centre found that 97 percent of respondents aged 18 to 35 intend to vote. Another survey, conducted by the International Republican Institute, found that 89 percent of respondents were likely or somewhat likely to vote.

Young voters link voting to real-life issues and concerns, one of the most pressing being the number of jobless graduates. Bangladesh had nearly nine lakh unemployed graduates in 2024, according to the Labour Force Survey 2024 released by the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS). Young voters want to know how the next government will tackle unemployment, improve the quality of education, reduce the cost of living, provide security to citizens, eliminate corruption, establish good governance and accountability, etc.

Political parties, therefore, must appeal to them with sincere and credible commitments. Universities are powerful spaces capable of shaping and influencing national politics. Recent student council elections in major universities have shown that youth groups who were able to connect meaningfully with the general students secured the largest victories. The BNP's student wing, by contrast, suffered repeated defeats, indicating that the party needs to work harder to appeal to the youth. Young people want an end to the status quo in which the state remains unaccountable, ordinary citizens feel powerless, and corruption erodes basic rights. Young women, in particular, will vote for a safer Bangladesh, one in which they can participate fully in all aspects of public life. Political parties must align themselves with these aspirations.

We believe that the country's democratic transition largely depends on youth turnout. With nearly half of the electorate being young, their participation will be the real test of whether Bangladesh is entering a new democratic phase. It will also determine whether, after years of erosion, public trust in elections can be restored.

## A sheer waste of public resources

Activate non-operational health facilities, deliver services to local communities

It is quite concerning that at least 80 government health facilities across 18 districts have remained non-operational for years, reflecting persistent systemic failures in healthcare governance. According to a report by this daily, of these facilities, 17 are hospitals (including four children's hospitals), 14 are community clinics, and 12 are extensions to existing hospitals, while the rest comprise structures such as quarters for health workers. Built over years at enormous public expense, these facilities remain unused due to shortages of manpower, lack of equipment, and bureaucratic delays. As a result, basic healthcare services are being disrupted in these districts.

One such facility is the 20-bed hospital in Gazipur's Talia village. Built at a cost of around Tk 20 crore in 2020, it remains unutilised to this day. A local family even donated two acres of land in good faith in the hope of ensuring access to medical services that never materialised. Similar situations exist in Rangpur, Madaripur, Savar, and other districts, where completed facilities continue to lie idle. Several trauma centres, meant to respond to the rising incidence of road accidents, remain non-functional, while the children's hospitals stand empty despite paediatric wards elsewhere struggling under pressure. In some cases, facilities have remained unused for over a decade.

Health ministry documents obtained by *The Daily Star* show that the construction of 41 facilities was completed by 2024, while the rest were built earlier. The documents cite lack of manpower, equipment, and medicines as the main reasons for their continued non-operation. This raises a fundamental question: why were these structures built without a comprehensive operational plan? Constructing them without ensuring staff recruitment, budgetary allocation, and service readiness reflects a serious disconnect between infrastructure development and healthcare delivery. That some of the facilities were built even without feasibility studies further underscores how poor planning and weak accountability have plagued the sector. The consequences have been undoubtedly severe, as patients in rural and semi-urban areas are forced to travel long distances to already overstretched hospitals, incurring high costs and risking dangerous delays in treatment.

Decades of inefficiency, mismanagement, and corruption have thus rendered large parts of our health sector incapable of delivering essential services. Restoring order to this ailing sector requires proper planning, coordination, and accountability at every stage—something that we have, unfortunately, yet to see under the interim administration. We urge the health authorities to urgently audit all idle facilities, fast-track recruitment and staff deployment, and hold those responsible for non-functional projects to account. We also hope the next elected government will prioritise the sector and implement the reform proposals put forward by the Health Sector Reform Commission to build an efficient, accountable, and people-oriented healthcare system.

# EDITORIAL

## Repeated rail freight failures are no longer acceptable



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

AHAMEDUL KARIM CHOWDHURY

Every few years, Bangladesh Railway's (BR) container services collapse under the same explanation: a shortage of locomotives. Each time, the consequences extend far beyond the railyard, reaching factories, ports, shipping lines, and buyer offices overseas. The most recent disruption between Chattogram Port and Dhaka's Kamalapur Inland Container Depot (ICD), widely reported in the press, is not an isolated operational failure. It is the predictable outcome of a system that still does not fully appreciate what international cargo logistics require: predictability over promises.

I spent more than a decade working at ICD Kamalapur, for much of that period heading the facility on behalf of the Chittagong Port Authority. During those years, locomotive crises occurred repeatedly. Each episode disrupted container movements between Chattogram and Dhaka, undermined service schedules, and gradually eroded customer confidence. The pattern has never fundamentally changed—only the scale of the damage.

Railway officials often argue that they have little choice but to prioritise passenger trains due to political and social sensitivities. While that reality cannot be ignored, it also exposes a core contradiction. Container freight generates significantly higher revenue than passenger services, yet freight operations are consistently the first to be sacrificed whenever resources are constrained. Short-term optics continue to override long-term economic logic, even though the costs of that decision are borne by exporters and, ultimately, by the national economy.

For international cargo, particularly exports, reliability is non-negotiable. Global supply chains operate on fixed shipping windows, vessel cut-off times, and contractual delivery obligations. If transport services are not predictable, exporters will not use them—regardless of price or stated capacity. This is precisely what happened at ICD Kamalapur.

Once the ICD failed to provide scheduled and dependable rail services, exporters—especially from the ready-made garments sector—began to withdraw. Volumes declined sharply. Regaining those users proved far more difficult than attracting new ones would have been. In logistics, trust is cumulative but fragile; once broken, it does not return easily.

Today, the RMG sector barely uses ICD Kamalapur for exports and does not use it at all for imports. The ICD's remaining users are primarily commercial importers, whose decisions are influenced less by transit reliability and more by customs administration behaviour. When customs enforcement is strict, import volumes shrink; when it is more accommodating, volumes flow despite delays and inefficiencies. These users tend to be price-insensitive and, as a result, they rarely raise formal complaints. Their tolerance has masked deeper structural failures.

BR has also moved forward with plans for another ICD at Ghorashal

The limited number of exporters who continue to use ICD-based exports—often under special arrangements or buyer-specific requirements—only highlights how narrow the ICD's relevance has become. This is not the result of insufficient demand but of institutional misalignment. Too many decision-makers still view rail freight as a secondary function rather than a strategic enabler of trade. The consequences of this mindset are now evident.

Against this backdrop, Bangladesh Railway's plans for new inland container depots deserve scrutiny. The proposed ICD at Dhrasram in Gazipur reflects a recognition that Kamalapur is no longer viable in its current location. Although I have previously advocated for Pubail as a more logical alternative to Dhrasram, given its existing rail connectivity, lower development cost, and faster implementation potential, focusing exclusively on site selection risks missing the more fundamental issue.

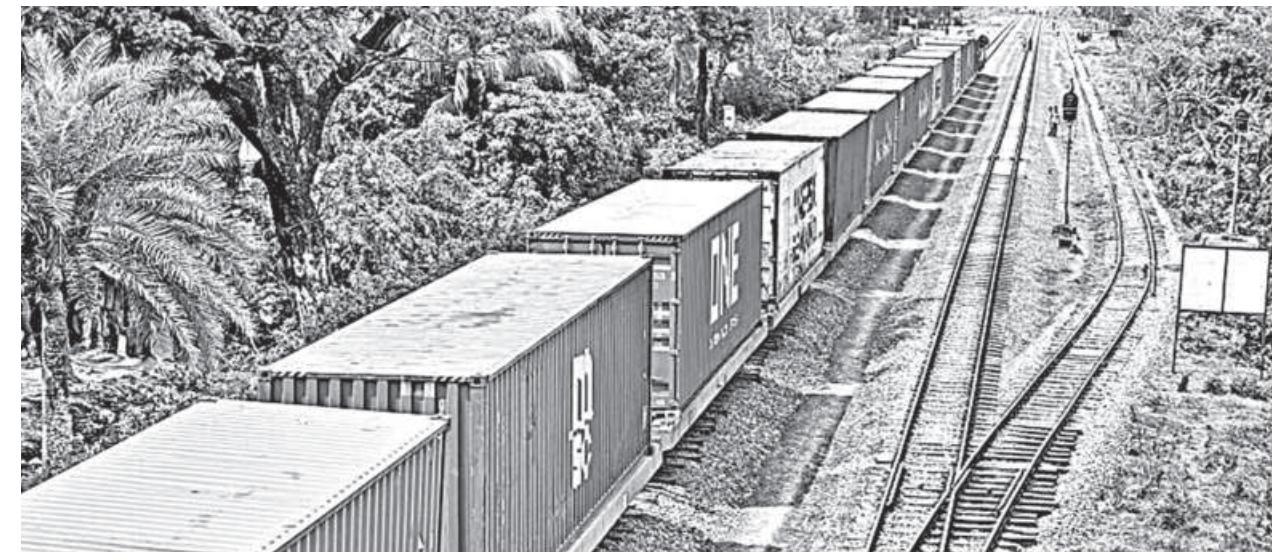
BR has also moved forward with plans for another ICD at Ghorashal

little improvement. Infrastructure alone does not create reliability. Governance does.

Any future ICD intended to serve the RMG sector must offer scheduled block trains, guaranteed cut-off times, transparent disruption management, and full integration with customs and port systems. It must be accountable to its users. Only under such conditions will exporters consider rail a dependable component of their supply chains.

Equally important is location. Kamalapur's constraints are no longer limited to rail capacity; they are geographic and structural. Situated in the heart of Dhaka, it is encircled by severe road congestion, restricted truck movement, and zero scope for expansion. Any new ICD must be outside the city core, connected to bypass roads, and designed to support uninterrupted cargo flows.

If these principles are applied, a professionally operated ICD—whether public, private, or PPP—could finally align rail transport with the needs of exporters, creating the path for the



'Exports run on predictability. Our railways must learn to do the same.'

FILE PHOTO: STAR

Exporters operate under entirely different constraints. RMG shipments are time-sensitive, buyer-driven, and penalty-exposed. A missed sailing can result in airfreight costs, order cancellations, or loss of buyer confidence. For such exporters, an ICD that cannot guarantee train schedules is not a support mechanism but a risk.

This is particularly unfortunate because ICD Kamalapur possesses a critical structural advantage for exports. Once containers are stuffed and sealed at the ICD, they move directly into Chattogram port terminals without intermediate handling. The risk of pilferage in transit is virtually nonexistent, barring extraordinary situations within restricted port areas. This should have made the ICD a preferred gateway for garment exports. Security, however, cannot compensate for uncertainty.

If new ICDs are run under the same institutional assumptions that have constrained Kamalapur—where passenger trains routinely get priority over freight services—then larger yards and modern equipment will deliver

under a public-private partnership involving Shasha Denim and Incontrade, reportedly under a design, build, finance, operate, maintain and transfer (DBFOT) model. These developments suggest that new financing and operating structures are being considered. Yet, whether an ICD is built at Dhrasram, Pubail, or Ghorashal, its success will not be determined primarily by location or contractual form. It will depend on whether it is operated as a genuine logistics enterprise, with enforceable service standards, professional management, and insulation from ad hoc operational decisions.

If new ICDs are run under the same institutional assumptions that have constrained Kamalapur—where passenger trains routinely get priority over freight services—then larger yards and modern equipment will deliver

RMG sector to return to rail and rely on it.

This, however, requires BR to confront its central contradiction. Freight cannot continue to be treated as expendable. As long as locomotives assigned to container services can be withdrawn at short notice to cover passenger shortfalls, no ICD will earn the trust of time-sensitive exporters. That is not simply a logistical misfortune; it is a policy failure.

Repeating that failure at new locations would be far more costly. The question facing policymakers is no longer whether Bangladesh needs more ICDs. It is whether Bangladesh is prepared to operate them as international trade infrastructure, rather than as peripheral extensions of a passenger-focused railway.

Exports run on predictability. Our railways must learn to do the same.

## Why women cleaners deserve recognition in city planning



Major Shajeda Akter Moni  
is deputy director at Research Centre of  
Bangladesh University of Professionals (BUP).

SHAJEDA AKTER MONI

During the still hours of the morning before daylight, some women in Dhaka take to the streets to perform a vital task. They sweep roads, drains, and clear open areas of rubbish to keep the city healthy and habitable. They do not alter great destinies, perhaps, but they frame everyday life in meaningful ways, yet their work goes unobserved, although it is worthy of appreciation.

These women keep our city clean, safe, and clear for its constituents, despite the challenges they face due to climate change. In Dhaka, the rising heat makes every outdoor task a test of endurance and determination. Studies have found that dehydration and health stress are common among women engaged in informal work, such as waste picking and street cleaning, who often spend long hours at dangerous levels of heat exposure. However, they continue doing what they must, no less dutifully.

Since garbage buildup leads to disease, clogged drains during monsoons and cause traffic hazards, these women address these risks before

the city begins to stir. The dimensions of their work correspond to the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) agenda, which maintains that peace is not merely the absence of war, but daily security, order, and communal nurturing. Yet, urban resilience and climate adaptation scholarship hardly recognises such women. The silence highlights how their work is unseen and left out of planning.

Last year, Transparency International Bangladesh organised a programme titled "Inclusive Solid Waste Management: Experience and Voices of Waste Workers," where women waste workers articulated demands for maternity care, night shift safety, hygiene facility access, fair recruitment, and improved links to city decision-makers. These are not excessive demands, nor are they disproportionate to humane working conditions, or the dignity of their work.

Another point worth noting is climate change's impact on women. Women carry the burden of climate hazards 14 times greater than men

because they are the key agents in responding to those hazards. The National Action Plan on climate change should prioritise the health of women and children, and take into consideration community-based adaptation actions. Such recognition at the national policy level can be strengthened through the inclusion of street cleaners in planning and resource allocation.

In fact, there is evidence that women at the grassroots are leading the way to climate adaptation interventions by creating seed banks, agri-resilience, and promoting and practicing safe birthing during natural disasters, as health and food security are at risk. This shows that community-based female action has value and that women acting outside formal authority can make a real difference to climate resilience.

This notion is directly applicable to the women street cleaners in Dhaka. Although they do not directly organise climate-resilient projects, their daily work keeps dangers at bay and ensures environmental well-being. Therefore, they should be integrated into climate action plans. They need to gain tangible benefits and clear standards of recognition and be valued in accordance with the Women, Peace, and Security principles. This would make their contributions meaningful.

Urban planning should also incorporate these women. Policy interventions can include shaded rest spaces, vending sites, or cleaning

points with water facilities, portable toilet stalls, shelter, providing kits of protective equipment and access to healthcare during heatwaves.

By recognising and empowering the women who are sweeping Dhaka and keeping it clean, the city will demonstrate its commitment to values founded on dignity, equity and interdependence.

But recognition cannot, of itself, be the end of the line. Real inclusion would mean that women cleaners are considered in the vision of Dhaka as a smart, climate-resilient, and peaceful megacity. With the government aggressively pushing to realise ambitious projects for greener roads, digital services and inclusive growth, it is time to simultaneously integrate the potential of women cleaners in city planning. Trees planted along their morning routes, water stations to keep them hydrated, and sanitation facilities would be much more than infrastructure; these would be a true demonstration of care and respect.

WPS agenda expands the vision of what "peace" means, challenging states to see peace as everyday actions that are safer and fairer for both genders. In Bangladesh, such visions led women to join peacekeeping, disaster resilience and grassroots leadership. Extending this culture to the women street sweepers is a natural next step. In acknowledging them, Dhaka can demonstrate a new definition of humanity, security, and prosperity.

# Remembering Khaleda Zia, her legal ordeal, and the courts that failed her



Imran A Siddiqi  
Barrister at Law, is a senior advocate. He served as a member of the Constitution Reform Commission (2024-2025) and a member of the expert legal panel of the National Consensus Commission (2025).

IMRAN A SIDDIQI

The immense gathering on the final day of 2025 for the janaza prayers of Begum Khaleda Zia marked a historic moment as millions came to pay their last respects to her. Overflowing the Jatiya Sangsad Bhaban grounds, mourners filled surrounding neighbourhoods, streets, rooftops, and even the subway. It was a spontaneous, unchoreographed expression of love and grief for a leader who had sacrificed her life for democracy. Standing in the lush green fields adjacent to the South Plaza, I found myself reflecting on Khaleda Zia's life of public service, firm resolve, and quiet sacrifice, and on the dignity with which she had endured years of struggle against autocracy.

As a practising member of the bar association, I witnessed—and participated in—numerous politically charged legal proceedings during the 15 years of Awami League's authoritarian rule. I was familiar with Khaleda Zia's cases and had the opportunity to discuss them with the late former attorney general, A. J. Mohammad Ali, who had represented her in all major legal proceedings. A neighbour of ours, Mr Ali often shared details of these cases, particularly his harrowing experiences during the Bakshibazar trials. It was clear that the system was rigged against her. Once the executive decided to prosecute, her fate was sealed. Yet Mr Ali remained resolute, once telling me, "We will keep going to court. We will keep knocking on their doors. They may turn us away, but we will come back again."

The Zia Orphanage Trust case was perhaps the most high-profile case against Khaleda Zia, yet a review of the facts reveals its tenuous foundation. She was accused of

an unprecedented move, enhanced the sentence to 10 years. The judges involved were later rewarded: the trial judge was elevated to the High Court Division and the presiding appellate judge to the Appellate Division.

The Zia Charitable Trust case followed a similar pattern. It concerned a private trust—the Shaheed Ziaur Rahman Charitable

special court.

The Niko graft case further illustrated how the legal system was weaponised against her. In 1998, after failing to secure a tender, the Canadian company Niko Resources submitted a proposal to then Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina to extract gas from Bangladesh. In 2001, the Hasina government directed that a

Zia over the Niko deal. In 2010, the High Court quashed the corruption proceedings against Sheikh Hasina. Yet in 2015, in broadly similar proceedings against Khaleda Zia, the High Court held that there was no legal bar to prosecuting her. A few years later, the presiding judge of the relevant High Court bench was elevated to the Appellate Division,

Medical) University authorities for appropriate treatment." The court did not even address the proviso to section 497(l) of the Code of Criminal Procedure, which allows preferential bail treatment for women and infirm persons accused of non-bailable offences.

It ultimately took a revolution, the loss of over a thousand lives, and the reconstitution of the Supreme Court to correct these injustices. In November 2024, the High Court Division set aside Khaleda Zia's conviction in the Zia Charitable Trust case. Shortly thereafter, in January 2025, the Appellate Division allowed her appeal in the Zia Orphanage Trust case, holding the proceedings to be a "manifestly contrived misapplication of the law" amounting to "malicious prosecution."

By the time Khaleda Zia was released, the damage to her health was irreversible. Years of incarceration, isolation, and denial of proper medical care had taken a devastating toll. The judiciary, constitutionally bound to protect fundamental rights, had instead acted at the behest of the executive, aided by a complicit Attorney General's Office and Anti-Corruption Commission. Judges lacking moral courage and prosecutors driven by political loyalty ensured that she remained imprisoned and unable to seek treatment abroad for what was once a manageable condition.

There is no doubt that the legal system had failed Khaleda Zia. It is difficult to comprehend how a former prime minister—elderly and gravely ill—was denied bail while her appeal remained pending before the Supreme Court. Those who relentlessly pursued her conviction displayed a lack of professional judgement and a readiness to serve partisan interests. The apex court's handling of her case, clearly shaped by the then prime minister's determination to politically eliminate Begum Zia, marks one of its darkest chapters. Its inability to deliver justice in a fair, impartial, and dispassionate manner is a sobering reminder of how far Bangladesh still has to go to achieve true judicial independence.



'There is no doubt that the legal system failed Khaleda Zia. Its inability to deliver justice in a fair and impartial manner is a sobering reminder of how far Bangladesh still has to go to achieve true judicial independence.'

FILE PHOTO: STAR

misappropriating funds from the "Prime Minister's Orphanage Fund" during her tenure from 1991 to 1996. The defence argued that the fund had never been entrusted to her and that, absent such entrustment, no charge of criminal misappropriation could stand. Evidence showed that the funds were donated by the Emir of Kuwait directly to the trust—facts fatal to the prosecution. Despite this, she was convicted and sentenced to seven years' imprisonment. On appeal, the High Court Division, in

Trust—with Khaleda Zia as the managing trustee and her two sons as trustees. Khaleda Zia was charged under section 5(2) of the Prevention of Corruption Act as a "public servant," despite the trust being a private trust within the meaning of the Trust Act. Ordinarily, such proceedings would have been quashed as an abuse of process, as the admitted facts disclosed no offence against her. Yet Khaleda Zia was tried, convicted, and sentenced to seven years' imprisonment by a

joint venture agreement with Niko be finalised and placed before the government. After the change of power, and in continuation of these decisions, Bapex and Niko signed an agreement on October 16, 2003, permitting Niko to extract gas from Bangladesh's gas fields.

During the Fakhruddin Ahmed-led 1/II government, the Anti-Corruption Commission, pursuing the so-called "minus two formula," initiated separate proceedings against Sheikh Hasina and Khaleda

superseding several senior judges.

As these proceedings dragged on, Khaleda Zia was repeatedly denied bail. In the Zia Orphanage Trust case, a medical board report was placed before the apex court stating that "her rheumatoid arthritis (RA) is highly active, with advanced deformities and marked functional decline." Despite the seriousness of her condition, the Appellate Division denied her bail, observing instead that "she should cooperate with the (Bangabandhu) Sheikh Mujib

## How modern wind turbine technology can reshape Bangladesh's energy future

Sudeepto Roy is research associate at the South Asian Network on Economic Modeling (SANEM). He can be reached at sudeeptoroy232@gmail.com.

Israt Hossain is director at SANEM. She can be reached at hossain.israt698@gmail.com

**SUDEEPTO ROY and ISRAT HOSSAIN**

Bangladesh, a developing economy heavily reliant on fossil fuels, is entering a critical phase of its energy journey amid rising energy demand and environmental challenges. The power sector, being the largest consumer of natural gas in the country, not only contributes to greenhouse gas emissions but also incurs high energy import costs, as evident in the 13.86 percent surge in LNG imports in FY2024-25. Thus, wind power is becoming a more practical choice as Bangladesh moves towards renewable energy sources.

Bangladesh has considerable potential for wind energy resources. However, the development of the wind energy sector is experiencing slow growth due to a challenging regulatory situation and investment uncertainty. Currently, there are 15 wind energy projects either in operation or in the planning stages, with a total capacity of 777,902 MWp, according to the SREDA. Bangladesh's first commercial wind power plant began its full-scale operation in March 2024. This marked a significant milestone for Bangladesh in its

capacity in Chandpur and Feni.

The wind energy sector is undergoing a major transformation due to recent revolutionary innovations in the way wind is harnessed for electricity generation, which also reduces costs. The recent developments are not only translating into higher efficiencies, but they are also bringing wind power closer to accessibility and affordability than ever. Optimisation of turbines for aerodynamic performance is highlighted as a key research theme in wind technology today. An increase in turbine efficiency is achieved via improved blade design and materials used. New blade designs provide an optimal aerodynamic profile that captures more wind energy over a wider range of wind speeds.

Notable advancements such as variable pitch and twist technologies enable blades to continuously vary to changing wind conditions over their entire span, optimising performance, minimising mechanical loads, and increasing their longevity. At present, the shift towards advanced materials is crucial. Today, most turbine blades are made of composite materials such as fibreglass and carbon fibre with good strength-to-weight ratios. This progress enables building larger blades that can capture more wind energy whilst also extending operational lifetime and reducing maintenance costs. Modern



'Currently, there are 15 wind energy projects either in operation or in the planning stages, with a total capacity of 777,902 MWp.'

One way to overcome limitations associated with regions with lower wind resources, such as Bangladesh, is a concept called "Low Wind", which uses special turbines for low wind speeds. The goal of this design is to produce power when traditional windfarms are not doing so, and eliminate the "cannibalisation effect" responsible for making electricity less expensive when suddenly all farms produce renewable energy at the same time, thus driving down prices. Low Wind turbines are identified by their very-long blades to optimise power at the lowest wind speed, and low cut-out speed around 12-13 metres per second.

Bangladesh can take advantage of the state-of-the-art technologies in wind turbines to enhance its renewable energy capacity. According to a detailed study conducted in 2018 by the US Department of Energy's National Renewable Energy Laboratory, Bangladesh has wind energy potential of at

least 30,000MW. The coastline is 710 km, and in the southwest lies the Sundarbans mangrove and in the southeast the Saint Martin's coral island. Since fixed wind turbines cannot be installed in the Bay of Bengal, floating wind farms can be positioned further out from shore. If we build seaside windfarms, for instance, using 153-metre blades, we could supply energy to a lot of homes simultaneously. Residential areas are best suited for bladeless turbines. They are easily manageable because they are small, quiet, and less demanding.

The adoption of wind power is expected to speed up the development trajectory for Bangladesh, as it will not only be a green energy source for households but also a powerhouse for the national economy. The growing wind power industry is also expected to nurture a new generation of trained workers, from engineers and maintenance staff to power managers, another factor contributing to the country's development.

Also, the environmental benefits of wind power go far beyond simply reducing carbon emissions. With an increasing demand and production of wind farms, the country will rely less on imported fossil fuels. This shift promises much cleaner air because burning coal releases toxic pollutants such as sulphur dioxide and nitrogen oxides, which conventional power plants continuously spew into the atmosphere daily.

Although there may still be some reliance on traditional sources in the short term, every step forward is crucial. The wind energy sector's coming-of-age can mean a solid green footing for a cleaner future and a better way of life in Bangladesh. In fact, we can lead the way in the deployment of advanced wind technologies with floating offshore farms and low-wind turbines, thus creating energy independence, new industries, and sustainable economic development, while ensuring a large reduction in national emissions.

transition towards renewable energy. Other projects are underway, including the 100 MW Anwara Wind Power in Chittagong, which is currently in the planning stages. This is expected to make a significant contribution to the country's renewable energy capacity by 2035. In addition, the 100 MW Wind Power Plant in Matarbari is set to be completed in 2026. Plans are also underway for wind power plants with lower

wind turbine towers now exceed heights of 160 metres, enabling the deployment of large rotors with diameters of up to 150 metres that can access stronger and more consistent winds at higher altitudes. Meanwhile, the use of segmented blades, which can be converted into long blades to improve the energy capture per turbine, reduces the cost of transportation, a key factor in lowering installation costs.



PHOTOS: SHEIKH MEHEDI MORSHED

## Curtains rise on DIFF

RAKSHANDA RAHMAN MISHA

The 24th *Dhaka International Film Festival (DIFF)* officially began yesterday at the main auditorium of the Bangladesh National Museum, marking the start of a ten-day celebration of world cinema under the theme "Nandanik Chalachitra, Mononshil Darshak, Alokiti Shomaj" (Aesthetic Films, Discerning Audience, Enlightened Society).

The opening ceremony brought together filmmakers, diplomats, artistes, and cinephiles, turning the venue into a vibrant hub of cultural exchange. Syeda Rizwana Hasan, Adviser for Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Water Resources, and Information and Broadcasting, attended the event as the chief guest. Croatian filmmaker Aleksandra Marković and Li Xiaopeng, Cultural Counselor at the Chinese Embassy in Bangladesh, were among the distinguished international guests. Jalal Ahmed, Executive Member of the Festival Committee, presided over the ceremony.

Speaking at the event, Syeda Rizwana Hasan highlighted the importance of cinema as a space for social interaction in an increasingly demanding life. "Life has become so tough that we hardly find time for social interaction. If I receive the festival schedule, I will definitely try to attend at least one or two screenings," she said.

She also stressed the need for environmental

responsibility, particularly in relation to the festival's special open-air screenings at Cox's Bazar. Emphasising that Laboni Beach is an ecologically fragile area, she urged organisers and audiences to avoid excessive lighting and refrain from using single-use plastic. The adviser further encouraged filmmakers and organisers to prioritise environmental themes.

Li Xiaopeng, Cultural Counselor at the Chinese Embassy, described cinema as a universal language. He praised DIFF for building cultural bridges over the years and expressed satisfaction over the Chinese Film Week, which features 13 Chinese films of diverse themes and styles. "We hope this initiative inspires cooperation, friendship, and meaningful dialogue among filmmakers," he said.

Croatian filmmaker Aleksandra Marković commended Bangladeshi cinema for its strong storytelling tradition and emerging contemporary voices. "Bangladesh cinema has a powerful presence. I am committed to promoting Bangladeshi films and filmmakers internationally and supporting opportunities for global collaboration," she said.

The evening also featured lively cultural performances by Theatrical Company and the Jol Torongo Dance Crew. The festival's first screening began at 5:30 pm with the Chinese film *Wu Jin Zhi Lu* (The Journey to No End), directed by Chen Xiang, followed by the Iranian drama *Without Me* by Mohammad Asadnia at 7 pm.

Film screenings will take place across multiple venues in Dhaka, including the Bangladesh National Museum, Kabi Sufia Kamal Auditorium, National Art Gallery, National Theatre Hall at Shilpkala Academy, Alliance Française de Dhaka, and Stamford University Bangladesh auditoriums.

For the first time, DIFF is also extending its reach to the coast with open-air screenings at Laboni Beach in Cox's Bazar from January 10 to 18, organised by the Bangladesh Tourism Board, allowing audiences to experience world cinema against the backdrop of the sea.

Complementing the film screenings, a visual art exhibition is being held from January 9 to 17 at the 3D Art Gallery of the Bangladesh Military Museum. Curated by Lutfa Mahmuda, the exhibition features work by 10 renowned Bangladeshi artistes and explores the intersection of cinema and visual art.

This year's festival showcases 245 films from 91 countries, including Bangladesh, across a wide range of sections such as Asian Film Competition, Retrospective, Wide Angle, Bangladesh Panorama, Cinema of the World, Children's Film Session, Women Filmmakers, Short and Independent Films, and Spiritual Films.

The 24th *Dhaka International Film Festival* will continue until January 18, offering audiences an expansive and diverse cinematic experience.

literary portraits, each shaped by sensory memory and the ethics of attention. In *Lotus Head*, she returns to a childhood moment of near drowning, a scene of sudden fear and helplessness in deep water. Over time, the water becomes a recurring metaphor, but it transforms.

She has a clear sense of what makes a person feel unmistakably themselves. For her, identity is preserved in the small, faithful details that outlast time. In *Dadu*, it is the cigarette, the newspapers, and the persistent instruction to "read the news". In *Boro Nanu*, it is the nimble hands shaping *pitha* and a sewing machine. In *Ekram Sir*, it is the harmonium. In *Chachi*, it is a packet of Maggi noodles and the unending stack of ungraded copies.

This detail reinforces the

## Brushstrokes Across Generations: Inside a father-daughter exhibition



PHOTOS: ABRAR FAIYAZ NILOY

FAIZA RAMIM

*Brushstrokes Across Generations*, a father and daughter painting exhibition, was inaugurated on January 9 at SHALA Neighbourhood Art Space, Aloki. The event was conceived as more than a display of finished works. A projector ran audiovisual material and portfolios created specifically for the occasion, supported by thoughtful food



arrangements and a steady flow of visitors. Afzal Hossain and Hashem Khan attended and delivered speeches that framed the exhibition within a wider conversation about artistic practice, discipline, and sincerity.

At the heart of the exhibition, there are two distinct yet complementary artistic approaches. Noman Anwar's paintings depict places and human habitats with a bright palette and a controlled precision. Working in oil and acrylic, he builds scenes that feel both luminous and exact, with careful strokes that hold detail without losing atmosphere.

Facing Noman's wall is Izma's work, which turns decisively toward the human interior. Her paintings capture people not only as subjects but as presences, shaped by intimacy, memory, and the emotional truths that outlive a moment.

Her artistic statements, in particular, operate like short

exhibition's central idea, that art is not only an outcome but a passage, and that what passes between generations is not a single style but a shared commitment to making. In this room, one wall offers the world as it looks when rendered through light, place, and precision. The other offers the world as it is remembered, felt, and carried. The movement between them makes the title feel accurate, formal, and earned. Visitors can attend the exhibition today and tomorrow from 1 pm to 9 pm.

Popular Bangladeshi band Shonar Bangla Circus has released a new double album titled *Mohashoshan*. The conceptual project features a total of 17 tracks, spread across two discs.

The first disc, *Mohashoshan 1*, includes nine songs, while the second, *Mohashoshan 2*, contains eight songs. The album was released on Thursday evening (January 8) at 8 pm Bangladesh time through the band's official YouTube channel and is now available on Spotify and other major international digital streaming platforms.

According to a press release, Shonar Bangla Circus will launch a solo concert series titled *Mohashoshan Jatra* two months from now, where all the songs from the new album will be performed live for the first time.

The current lineup of the band includes Probar Ripon, Seth Panduranga Blumberg, Shakil Haque, and Saad Chowdhury.



## SHONAR BANGLA CIRCUS returns with double album 'Mohashoshan'

# TAHSAN confirms separation with ROZA

Popular singer and actor Tahsan Khan surprised everyone early last year by announcing his marriage without any prior hint or rumours. He had embarked on this new chapter of his life with makeup artist Roza Ahmed.

However, reports suggest that the couple's relationship has not been going well for several months, and their marriage is now on the verge of breaking down. In fact, the couple has been living separately for the past few months.

Tahsan Khan confirmed this news to several media outlets, saying, "The news is true. We have been separated and living apart since the end of July. I will share

further details at the appropriate time."

He also mentioned that he was not keen to discuss his personal life publicly at this stage. "I didn't want to speak about my personal life in public. But I saw some false news about our wedding anniversary, which is why I need to clarify that we are no longer together," he added.

Tahsan Khan had married Roza Ahmed on January 4, 2025, after knowing her for just four months. Roza is a professional makeup artist with over a decade of experience in Bangladesh and the United States and runs her own makeup studio in New York.

## Ahmed Hasan Sunny and Nusrat Maati host post-wedding reception



In May last year, university lecturer and filmmaker Nusrat Maati and musician-filmmaker Ahmed Hasan Sunny tied the knot in an intimate family ceremony. At the time, the couple had planned to host a post-wedding reception for friends and colleagues at a more convenient time. In line with that plan, they completed their post-marriage formalities on Friday night, in the presence of friends, well-wishers, and acquaintances beyond the immediate family.

Meanwhile, Sunny's film *Ekhane Rajnoitik Alaap Joruri* is set for release on January 16. Ahead of the release, the filmmaker has been busy with promotional activities, with the teaser, trailer and songs already unveiled. Completing the wedding formalities before the film's release has been a source of relief for him.

Before their marriage, Ahmed Hasan Sunny and Nusrat Maati shared a friendship of nearly three years, which eventually blossomed into a marital relationship.

Maati, who studied film in Europe, is currently working as a story and screenplay writer, alongside teaching film studies at a private university.



## Can AI predict suicide?

Artificial intelligence (AI) and machine learning are increasingly being used in healthcare, raising hopes that technology could help identify people at risk of suicide and self-harm earlier than ever before. However, a new study suggests that machine learning tools are not reliable enough to predict suicidal behaviour in a way that would be useful for everyday healthcare. While there has been growing hope that artificial intelligence could help doctors identify people at high risk and intervene earlier, the research indicates that this promise has not yet been fulfilled.

For decades, clinicians have used various risk assessment tools to try to predict suicide or self-harm, but these have generally struggled to do so accurately. Machine learning was expected to improve this by analysing large amounts of health information and spotting hidden patterns. However, the latest findings show that these newer approaches perform no better than traditional methods.

In simple terms, the algorithms are much better at identifying people who are unlikely to harm themselves than those who actually will. Many



individuals who later went on to self-harm or die by suicide were incorrectly labelled as "low risk". At the same time, a large number of people flagged as "high risk" never went on to harm themselves, meaning the tools also generate many false alarms.

The researchers conclude that relying on these predictions could be misleading and potentially harmful if they are used to decide who receives care or support. Current clinical guidelines already advise against using risk prediction alone to guide treatment, and this study reinforces that advice.

SOURCE: PLOS MEDICINE

## 7,000 steps a day could be the sweet spot for better health!

Staying physically active is widely known to be good for health, but how much activity is really enough? For years, the popular target of 10,000 steps a day has dominated fitness advice, despite limited scientific backing. Now, a major new study published in *The Lancet* Public Health suggests that a lower and more achievable goal – around 7,000 steps a day – may be enough to significantly reduce the risk of a wide range of serious health problems.

The study brings together evidence from dozens of previous studies involving more than 160,000 adults, making it one of the most comprehensive reviews of step-based physical activity to date. The findings show that people who walk around 7,000 steps per day have a much lower risk of early death compared with those who take very few steps. Regular walking at this level is also linked to lower risks of heart disease, type 2 diabetes, some cancers, depression, dementia and even falls.

Importantly, the benefits are not limited to people who are already active. Even increasing daily movement from very low levels to moderate levels appears to make a meaningful difference. People

who walked around 4,000 steps a day were healthier than those taking roughly 2,000 steps, showing that small increases in activity can still deliver health gains.

For certain conditions, particularly heart disease, benefits continued to increase beyond 7,000 steps. However, for most outcomes, the improvements tended to level off, suggesting that more steps are not always necessary to gain protection.

One of the most significant aspects of this research is its practicality. Many people find the 10,000-step target intimidating or unrealistic, especially older adults, people with long-term conditions or those who are currently inactive. A 7,000 step goal may feel far more achievable and could encourage more people to move regularly rather than give up altogether.

The study also broadens the conversation about physical activity. Rather than focusing solely on heart health or weight, it highlights links between walking and brain health, mental wellbeing and independence later in life. The association with reduced risk of dementia and depression, while still based on limited evidence, is particularly encouraging given the growing public health burden of these conditions.

Daily step counts are simple to track using smartphones, watches or pedometers, making them an accessible way for people to monitor their activity. Unlike structured exercise plans, walking can easily be built into daily routines – such as commuting, shopping or spending time outdoors.

The findings could help shape future public health guidance by offering a clear, realistic target that still delivers meaningful health benefits. For individuals, the message is reassuring: you do not need to run marathons or hit extreme fitness goals to improve your health. Consistent, moderate movement can go a long way.

Aim to move more, sit less, and remember that every step counts – with 7,000 steps a day emerging as a realistic and beneficial goal for many people.



DR M EASIN ALI

As winter approaches, many people experience an increase in joint pain and stiffness. The condition is particularly noticeable in the knees, lower back, neck, shoulders, and small joints of the hands and feet. Individuals suffering from osteoarthritis, rheumatoid arthritis, or other rheumatic disorders; those with previous joint injuries; and older adults are especially prone to worsening symptoms during the colder months. Seasonal environmental changes and lifestyle factors are key contributors to this problem.

During winter, lower temperatures cause blood vessels to constrict, reducing blood flow to the joints and surrounding muscles. This reduced circulation often leads to increased pain, stiffness, and discomfort. Cold weather also affects the synovial fluid inside the joints, making it thicker and less effective in facilitating smooth movement. Furthermore, reduced physical activity during winter results in joint stiffness and muscle weakness. Changes in

humidity and atmospheric pressure may also aggravate joint pain in susceptible individuals.

Effective management of winter-related joint pain requires proper care and timely treatment. Keeping the body and affected joints warm is essential. Wearing warm clothing, using knee or lumbar supports, and avoiding exposure to cold air can significantly reduce discomfort. Heat therapy applied to painful joints helps improve blood circulation and relieves stiffness.

Physiotherapy is one of the most effective treatment approaches for managing joint pain in winter. Modalities such as ultrasound therapy, shortwave diathermy, interferential therapy (IFT), TENS, and joint-specific therapeutic exercises help reduce pain, improve mobility, and restore joint function. Regular stretching and light strengthening exercises enhance muscle support around the joints and prevent further deterioration.

Medications, including pain relievers and anti-inflammatory drugs, should only be taken under medical supervision. In

some cases, supplements such as calcium and vitamin D may be recommended. Self-medication for prolonged periods should be avoided, specialised treatments or joint injections may be necessary for severe conditions.

A balanced diet also plays a crucial role in maintaining joint health. Foods rich in calcium, vitamin D, protein, and omega-3 fatty acids – such as milk, eggs, small fish, vegetables, fruits, and nuts – are beneficial. Adequate hydration helps maintain joint lubrication, while weight control reduces excessive pressure on weight-bearing joints.

In summary, increased joint pain during winter is a common but manageable condition. With proper medical care, regular physiotherapy, a healthy lifestyle, and adherence to professional advice, individuals can maintain joint health and mobility throughout the winter season.

The writer is the Chairman and Chief Consultant at Dhaka City Physiotherapy Hospital, Dhanmondi, Dhaka.  
Email: dreasin20@gmail.com

## Health records could help spot diabetes early

Diabetes is often thought of as an individual condition, but growing evidence suggests it can affect entire households. Lifestyle habits, shared environments and genetics mean that when one person is at risk, others living under the same roof may be too. New research presented at the European Association for the Study of Diabetes (EASD) Annual Meeting in Vienna showed that analysing routine health records at a household level could help identify people at risk of diabetes much earlier than current approaches.

The study focused on adults with prediabetes and examined the health profiles of people living with them, including other adults and children. It found that diabetes risk frequently clusters within households, with many family members showing warning signs such as excess weight or abnormal blood sugar levels. Some adults living with someone who had prediabetes were already showing



signs of type 2 diabetes, while many children had risk factors that could place them in danger later in life.

This approach could help health systems move from treating individuals to supporting whole families. Identifying risk early creates opportunities for shared lifestyle changes, earlier testing and prevention programmes before diabetes develops. It may also help uncover undiagnosed cases, particularly in people who feel well and would not otherwise seek testing.

Overall, the findings highlight a simple but powerful idea: preventing diabetes may be more effective when families are supported together, rather than one person at a time.

## Meeting clean air targets could curb the diabetes burden in Bangladesh

JUWEL RANA

Air pollution may play a significant role in Bangladesh's rapidly growing diabetes burden, according to a new nationally representative study that finds that air pollution increases diabetes risk among adults.

In our study of 13,965 adults, published in the prestigious international journal *Science of the Total Environment*, we found that Bangladesh's annual average  $PM_{2.5}$  concentration, approximately 70 micrograms per cubic metre, is among the highest globally and far exceeds both national standards and World Health Organisation (WHO) air quality guidelines. Currently, about 16 percent of Bangladeshi adults live with diabetes, highlighting the scale of the public health challenge we are facing.

We discovered that each 10 microgram per cubic metre increase in long-term  $PM_{2.5}$  exposure was associated with a 10 percent higher risk of diabetes. We also found that urban residents, women, older adults, and individuals with obesity or hypertension were particularly vulnerable to the air pollution-related risk of diabetes.



Our analysis further estimates that between 4.6 and 7.5 percent of diabetes cases nationwide could be prevented if Bangladesh were able to meet its national clean air target of  $15 \mu g/m^3$  per year or the WHO interim air quality guideline of  $35 \mu g/m^3$ . We observed that the largest potential health gains would be seen among urban residents, women, older adults, and those with obesity or hypertension.

Districts with heavy industrial activity and dense populations, such as Dhaka, Narayanganj, Gazipur, and Munshiganj, are likely to benefit most from improved air quality, with substantial potential reductions in the diabetes burden. While diabetes is often associated with lifestyle factors, the study highlights air pollution as an underrecognised risk factor. Long-term  $PM_{2.5}$  exposure may increase the risk of diabetes through inflammation, oxidative stress, and impaired insulin function, underscoring air pollution control as a critical public health intervention.

The writer is a doctoral candidate in environmental epidemiology at McGill University, Canada, and led this research.  
Email: juwel.rana@mail.mcgill.ca

## Silent threats before birth: Air pollution and climate risks for infants

Prenatal exposure to ambient air pollution

and climatic factors, such as temperature and rainfall, is associated with adverse birth outcomes in India, according to a new study published in *PLOS Global Public Health*. Ambient fine particulate matter ( $PM_{2.5}$ ), tiny particles less than 2.5 microns in diameter produced mainly by burning fossil fuels and biomass, poses a significant health risk and has been linked to a variety of paediatric and adult illnesses. India is among the most polluted countries globally, with  $PM_{2.5}$  levels far exceeding both national and World Health Organisation standards.

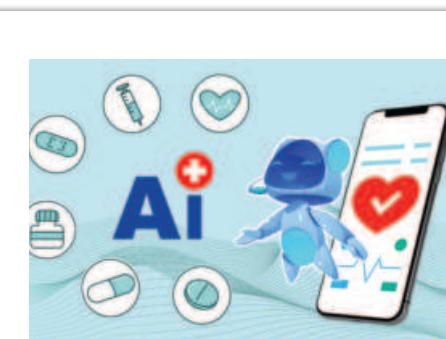


While most research on air pollution and birth outcomes has focused on high-income countries, this study examined the impact of  $PM_{2.5}$  at the national level in India, assessing low birth weight and preterm birth. Using satellite data and large-scale surveys, the researchers found that higher in utero exposure to  $PM_{2.5}$  was associated with

increased risks of both outcomes. Climatic factors, including high temperatures and irregular rainfall, were also linked to adverse birth outcomes. Northern districts of India were identified as particularly vulnerable.

The study highlights the need for targeted public health interventions. Strengthening the National Clean Air Program with stricter emission standards and improved air quality monitoring is recommended, alongside climate adaptation measures such as heat action plans and better water management. Awareness campaigns for pregnant women about the risks of air pollution and climate extremes could also help reduce health risks.

The findings underscore the importance of integrating air quality management and climate resilience into maternal and child health strategies to protect vulnerable populations and improve birth outcomes across India.



## AI in colonoscopy: A helpful tool or a risk to doctors' skills?

Artificial intelligence (AI) is rapidly becoming part of everyday medical care, with growing enthusiasm for its ability to support doctors in making faster and more accurate decisions. In colonoscopy, AI systems have been widely welcomed for helping clinicians identify precancerous growths that might otherwise be overlooked. However, emerging evidence suggests that routine dependence on this technology may have unintended consequences.

In a recent study, researchers compared colonoscopies performed by highly experienced specialists before and after AI tools were introduced into regular clinical practice. Although AI-assisted procedures continued to show strong detection results, a different pattern emerged when clinicians worked without technological support. Several months after AI became routine, the same specialists were less successful at identifying precancerous growths on their own.

These findings raise important concerns about whether long-term AI use could reduce clinicians' vigilance or decision-making skills when technology is unavailable. Notably, this is the first study to suggest that artificial intelligence may negatively affect healthcare professionals' ability to perform a task that has direct and meaningful consequences for patient outcomes.

Colonoscopy plays a crucial role in preventing bowel cancer by identifying and removing precancerous lesions early. If reliance on AI weakens clinicians' core skills, this could have implications for patient safety, particularly in settings where AI tools are unavailable or malfunction. The study highlights the importance of balancing innovation with ongoing training as AI becomes more embedded in healthcare.

SOURCE: THE LANCET GASTROENTEROLOGY & HEPATOLOGY

# No top players in Bangladesh now: Moeen Ali

Despite having stepped away from international cricket in 2024, Moeen Ali remains a familiar presence in franchise leagues worldwide. A long-time observer of Bangladesh cricket -- tracing back to his age-level playing days, stints in the country's domestic circuit, and personal ties to Sylhet -- the 38-year-old is back in the Bangladesh Premier League (BPL), representing Sylhet Titans this edition. In a conversation with The Daily Star's Samsul Arefin Khan, the former England all-rounder spoke about Bangladesh cricket's development gaps, the BPL's reputation issues, the politics shaping the modern game, and more. The excerpts follow:

**The Daily Star (DS): How do you assess Bangladesh cricket's evolution?**

**Moeen Ali (MA):** Initially, I saw Bangladesh evolving nicely with players like Tamim [Iqbal] and Shakib [Al Hasan], but I also feel it has not improved enough recently. While there are many good players now, there are no top players. And that's where Bangladesh cricket is struggling... In the BPL, some of the shot selection the players do is so silly; the

problem is that people have become used to seeing the same mistakes constantly. I've been here for a few seasons, and I still see them making the same mistakes. It feels like the players here are very slow at learning.

**DS: Why hasn't Bangladesh produced match-winners of late?**

**MA:** You guys talk about the top five, but I actually believe it's two -- Tamim and Shakib -- who were outstanding... The difference is that those top players singlehandedly won games for many years on their own.

**DS: Do you think Bangladesh were unlucky with Tamim and Shakib's recent absences?**

**MA:** I think Tamim sticks to what he believes is right and does what he feels is best for him. I admire that he says when he feels something is wrong, regardless of politics. Generally, the mindset in Bangladesh regarding journalism, punditry, coaching, and facilities needs to improve.

**DS: Apart from Rishad [Hossain] and Mustafizur [Rahman], who else has global potential?**

**MA:** Litton Das, Najmul Hossain Shanto, and Tawhid Hridoy are good players with ability. Hridoy is one of the most



talented players in Bangladesh, but I haven't seen his improvement continue since I played with him a few years ago. Players must challenge themselves in practice by working on things they aren't good at, rather than just practising their strengths.

**DS: Why hasn't the BPL reached the**

**level of newer franchise leagues?**

**MA:** It is a matter of reputation regarding payments... Players talk to each other; if someone doesn't get paid, they won't return and will tell others not to risk coming. New franchises have to deal with the negative reputation that existed before them.

**DS: Why would you encourage players to come to the BPL?**

**MA:** Because it is good for the game. I would tell young players it is very good for their development because the conditions are difficult.

**DS: What's your view on the BCB ICC situation after Mustafizur's IPL snub?**

**MA:** I'm sad for Mustafizur. It is a shame that politics is mixed with sport, and often politicians are the ones running the cricket. Even if you see Gautam Gambhir, he becomes a politician after retiring and then becomes coach of India.

**DS: Is the "Big Three" becoming a "Big One" with India dominating?**

**MA:** I don't blame India -- one of my favourite places. But they are only doing what Australia and England did before them: making sure they are okay. Other boards often remain silent because their own teams and finances are fine, so no one stands up for what is actually right.

# BFL 2nd phase from Feb 6 to Apr 29

**SPORTS REPORTER**

As per a detailed fixtures list released by the Bangladesh Football Federation on Saturday, the second phase of the Bangladesh Football League will resume on February 6 and conclude on April 29.

The first phase of the league ended on January 3, immediately followed by the mid-term transfer window. With the window set to close on January 31, domestic football will return on February 3 with two Federation Cup fixtures -- Brothers Union facing PWD at the Bashundhara Kings Arena in Dhaka, and Rahmatganj taking on Abahani at the Shaheed Dhirendranath Datta Stadium in Cumilla.

The Federation Cup group-stage matches will continue until March 10, all to be held at the same two venues, before an eliminator and a qualifier scheduled for March 17. The second qualifier will be played on April 7, while the final is set for April 17.

Meanwhile, the league's resumption on February 6 will feature two matches on the opening day, followed by three more fixtures the next day. The competition will then pause for a 12-day break due to the national elections slated for February 12. Another major break will follow from March 15 to April 9 for Eid-ul-Fitr.

After the Eid recess, the league will run smoothly into its final stretch, culminating in the 18th and last round on April 28, when five matches are scheduled to be played on the final matchday.

## BIGGEST EVER FA CUP SHOCK



PHOTO: AFP

Crystal Palace's FA Cup defence ended in humiliation as sixth-tier Macclesfield beat the holders 2-1, overturning a record 117-place gap -- the biggest in the competition's history. Captain Paul Dawson headed the underdogs ahead just before half-time, before Isaac Buckley-Ricketts bundled in a second after the break. Jeremy Pino pulled one back for Palace with a free-kick in the 90th minute, but it could not save them from going down in history for the wrong reasons. The victory was all the more emotional for a club reformed in 2020 after unpaid debts and still grieving the death of 21-year-old forward Euan McLeod. Stunned, Palace manager Oliver Glasner admitted: "I have no explanation for what I have seen today."

## Clasico clash for the first crown



PHOTO: REAL MADRID

**The first Clasico of the year, a chance to lift the season's first trophy, and a battle of ego and revenge -- the Spanish Super Cup final between Real Madrid and Barcelona at the King Abdullah Sport City Stadium in Jeddah on Sunday already has plenty at stake, alongside the usual hype that accompanies this historic rivalry.**

» This will be the fourth consecutive time that Real Madrid and Barcelona face off in the final of the competition.

» The two sides have met 18 times in the Spanish Super Cup, with Real winning 10 matches, Barca claiming six victories, and two ending in draws.

» After a tumultuous period near the end of 2025 that left Real coach Xabi Alonso on the brink of the sack, Los Blancos have turned things around with five consecutive victories, the latest a 2-1 win over city rivals Atletico Madrid in the semifinals.

» A win in the final would hand Xabi Alonso his first trophy as Real coach and provide him some breathing room.

» Xabi's Real won the first Clasico of the season with a 2-1 LaLiga victory last year. But before his arrival, the side were hammered 5-2 at the same stage last season, also at the same venue in Jeddah.

» Real will be boosted by the return of Kylian Mbappe, who missed the semifinal due to a knee sprain suffered in late December, although Xabi said he would be cautious about including the club's top scorer, who has 29 goals in 24 matches across all competitions this season.

» In each of the last three seasons, the Super Cup winners also went on to win LaLiga.

» The final offers Barcelona added incentive, as they have the chance to retain the title for a second consecutive year -- something no side has managed in the past 15 years.

» Should Barcelona lift the trophy, the Blaugrana would also end another notable trend, as it has been eight years since the reigning league champions went on to win the Super Cup the following season.

## Batters' dip in form deepens Tigers' worries

SAMSUL AREFIN KHAN from Sylhet

(ICC).

Yet the scorecards tell a clearer story. Other than Sylhet Titans opener Parvez Hossain Emon, who is second on the tournament's run-getters' list with 236 runs in eight innings, including two half-centuries, none of the other batters from Bangladesh's World Cup squad feature in the top 10. Bangladesh captain Litton Das is next among the squad members with 129 runs from six matches for Rangpur Riders. Dhaka Capitals' Shamim Hossain, one of the options for the Tigers' fragile middle order, has scored 114 runs in five innings -- 81 of which came in a single knock against Sylhet that still ended in defeat.

Rangpur's Tawhid Hridoy, who began with a fifty against Rajshahi Warriors in the second match, has struggled since, managing 106 runs in six games. Rajshahi opener Tanzid Tamim has 87 runs from six matches, failing to convert starts, while Saif Hassan has scored just 48 runs in five matches and was even rested by Dhaka after four games. Rangpur skipper Nurul Hasan has only 20 runs from four innings, and Dhaka all-rounder Saifuddin 41 from three -- figures well below expectations.

Rajshahi head coach Hannan Sakar



PHOTO: FACEBOOK

attempted to explain the slump.

"Form in T20 cricket depends a lot on batting position, team strategy, and environment," Hannan told reporters in Sylhet on Saturday. "In franchise cricket, players have to fit into the team's plan. Ideally, World Cup players want to play in their natural roles and carry confidence forward, but in the BPL that isn't always possible."

In contrast, Bangladesh's bowlers have been impressive. Chattogram Royals pacer Shoriful Islam leads the wicket-takers' list with 13 wickets from seven matches at an economy rate of 6.92. Rangpur's Mustafizur Rahman has 12 wickets from six games at 6.52. Among the spinners, Rajshahi's Nasum has nine wickets in eight matches, including a stunning 5-7 -- the best bowling figure by a spinner in BPL history -- while Chattogram's Mahedi Hasan has seven wickets from as many games.

Rishad Hossain, the only World Cup-bound Bangladeshi currently playing in the Big Bash League, also claimed 11 wickets in eight matches and earned the 'world-class' tag from Hobart Hurricanes captain Nathan Ellis. However, Taskin Ahmed and Saifuddin remain concerns, with low wicket tallies and economy rates above eight.

Hannan repeated the familiar line that "one or two good innings can change everything" for batters. But with Bangladesh's World Cup participation still uncertain, the batters' form could at least have offered some reassurance -- and for now, that much-needed relief remains nowhere in sight.



**Morocco forward Brahim Diaz celebrates in trademark fashion after scoring the opening goal in a 2-0 victory over Cameroon in the quarterfinals of the Africa Cup of Nations in Rabat on Friday night. The Real Madrid star is currently the top-scorer in the tournament with five goals, leading Ademola Lookman of Nigeria and Amad Diallo of Ivory Coast by two goals. Morocco have made it to the last four for the first time in 22 years.**

PHOTO: AFP



**BSRM**  
THE ONLY STEEL FACTORY IN BANGLADESH TO RECEIVE THE  
**GREEN FACTORY AWARD 2025**



## Pro-AL teacher chased in CU, handed over to proctor

CU CORRESPONDENT

Leaders of the Chittagong University Central Students' Union (Cucusu) yesterday heckled a faculty member who is said to be aligned with the Awami League and handed him over to the proctor's office.

The incident occurred around noon when Hasan Muhammad Roman, an assistant professor in Chittagong University's law department, was supervising the 'B' unit admission test for the 2025-26 academic session at Gallery I.

Roman had taken a stance against the quota reform movement in July 2024, according to multiple complaints received by the university administration. In response, the university formed an investigation committee, whose work is still ongoing.

"A teacher known as an associate of fascism was performing admission test

SEE PAGE II COL.4



PHOTO: HABIBUR RAHMAN

**BYPASS OR OFFROAD?...** Dust clouds from passing traffic on the unpaved Sonadanga Bypass Link Road at Khulna's Khalashi Mor are further worsening the air quality, which is already poor owing to the dry season. This busy road serving traffic to and from the Sonadanga Bus Terminal has been left in disrepair for an extended period. The photo was taken yesterday.

## 3 from Ctg family killed in Oman car crash

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Three members of a family from Fatikchari upazila of Chattogram were killed in a fatal road accident in Oman on Friday night, the authorities said, quoting family members.

The accident occurred in Oman's Salalah at around 8:00 pm local time.

The deceased were identified as Billik Begum, wife of Shahul Alam; her son Muhammad Sakibul Hasan and son-in-law Didarul Alam. The family hails from

SEE PAGE II COL.4

## 11 parties 'close to reaching seat-sharing deal'

Jamaat, NCP leaders say

MAMUNUR RASHID and SHAMIMA RITA

Leaders of the 11-party alliance, including Jamaat-e-Islami, Islami Andolan Bangladesh and the National Citizen Party, say they are nearing a seat-sharing agreement after resolving most of their differences through months of negotiations.

After nearly three months of talks, alliance leaders say they are now

cautiously optimistic about reaching an understanding across all 300 constituencies.

Negotiations have moved through a mix of one-on-one meetings and broader discussions, with a full meeting of all 11 parties also expected.

An agreement, they say, is likely before January 20, the deadline for withdrawing nomination papers.

Asked about the timeline, NCP

Convenor Nahid Islam yesterday said, "We will announce it within a day or two."

He made the remarks while speaking to reporters after meeting a delegation of European Union election observers at a hotel in the capital.

Besides Jamaat, IAB and the NCP, the alliance includes Bangladesh Khelafat Majlis, Khelafat Majlis, Bangladesh

SEE PAGE II COL.4



Anti-war activists hold placards during a rally against the US aggression on Venezuela outside Downing Street in London, Britain, yesterday.

PHOTO: REUTERS

## Venezuela eyes talks to resolve crisis

Trump pitches Venezuela oil to US companies, gets lukewarm response

AGENCIES

Venezuela was set to hold talks on Saturday with US envoys in Caracas on restoring diplomatic ties, days after US forces deposed Nicolas Maduro as its president.

Venezuela said Friday it had launched discussions with US diplomats in the capital, the latest sign of cooperation following the leftist leader's capture and US President Donald Trump's claim to be "in charge" of the South American country.

Officials said the US envoys were in Caracas to discuss reopening the country's embassy, while in Washington Trump met with oil companies over his plans to access Venezuela's huge crude reserves.

The government of interim President Dely Rodriguez "has

to Caracas to conduct an initial assessment for a potential phased resumption of operations," a US official said on customary condition of anonymity.

Venezuela said it would be reciprocating by sending a delegation to Washington.

Rodriguez in a statement condemned "the serious, criminal, illegal and illegitimate attack" by the United States and vowed: "Venezuela will continue to confront this aggression through the diplomatic route."

Trump said earlier Friday that he had called off a second wave of attacks on Venezuela due in part to the release of political prisoners.

The US president had suggested he might use force again to get his way in Venezuela, which has the

**5** Fifth tanker linked to Caracas seized

**6** Pro-Maduro protests held in Venezuela

**7** Trump set to meet Machado next week

decided to initiate an exploratory diplomatic process with the government of the United States of America, aimed at re-establishing diplomatic missions in both countries," Foreign Minister Yvan Gil said in a statement.

John McNamara, the top US diplomat in neighboring Colombia, and other personnel "travelled

SEE PAGE II COL.1

## Dhaka pushes Washington to lower tariffs

Urges ease of US visa bonds; shows interest in joining int'l stabilisation force for Gaza

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh's reciprocal tariff rate on exports to the United States may see further reduction from the current 20 percent, bringing it more in line with regional competitors, as both governments move to strengthen bilateral trade ties, according to a statement from the Chief Adviser's Press Wing yesterday.

US Trade Representative Ambassador Jamieson Greer has agreed to raise the possibility of lowering the tariff with President Donald Trump, following a request from National Security Adviser Khalilur Rahman during his ongoing visit to Washington, said the statement.

Both sides also discussed a proposed preferential scheme that would allow tariff-free entry of Bangladeshi textile and apparel exports equivalent to the country's imports of US cotton and man-made fibre inputs, measured on a square-metre basis.

Bangladesh currently faces a 36.5 percent tariff on exports to the US. Since August last year, the Trump administration has imposed a 20 percent reciprocal tariff on Bangladeshi goods, in addition to the existing 16.5 percent duty. President Trump had initially proposed a 37 percent tariff, but following intense negotiations, the rate was reduced to 20 percent.

The concession came after Bangladesh pledged to increase imports of American products, including aircraft, cotton, LNG, soybeans, and wheat, in a bid to narrow the \$6 billion trade gap between the two countries.

Meanwhile, US Under-Secretary of State for Political Affairs Allison Hooker said Washington may review the bond requirements for the



Khalilur Rahman

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## গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার

পরিচালক ও অধ্যাপকের কার্যালয়

জাতীয় অর্থোপেডিক হাসপাতাল ও পুনর্বাসন প্রতিষ্ঠান-নিটোর

শেরে বাংলা নগর, ঢাকা-১২০৭

তারিখঃ-০৬/০১/২০২৬ ইং।

## ভর্তির বিজ্ঞপ্তি

ঢাকা বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ের চিকিৎসা অনুষদের অধীনে জাতীয় অর্থোপেডিক হাসপাতাল ও পুনর্বাসন প্রতিষ্ঠান (নিটোর), শেরে বাংলা নগর, ঢাকায় ২০২৫-২০২৬ শিক্ষাবর্ষ ৪(চার) বছর একাডেমিক এবং ১ বছর বাধ্যতামূলক ইন্টার্নশীপ সহ সর্বমোট ৫(পাঁচ) বছর মেয়াদী বি.এস.সি.ইন ফিজিওথেরাপি কোর্সের প্রথম বর্ষে জাতীয়/জাতীয়ি ভর্তির জন্য অনলাইনের মাধ্যমে আবেদনপত্র আবেদন করা যাইতেছে। অনলাইন আবেদন

<https://nitorbd.bigmsoft.com> এর মাধ্যমে করিতে হচ্ছে। ভুক্তিমৌক্কার স্থানের জন্য দুইটি আসন এবং উপজাতী প্রার্থীদের জন্য একটি আসন সংরক্ষিত থাকিবে, একেরে মুক্তিমৌক্কার স্থানের ওপর উপজাতী প্রার্থীদের জন্য একটি আসন সংরক্ষিত থাকিবে। আসন সংরক্ষিত থাকিবে এবং উপজাতী প্রার্থীদের জন্য একটি আসন সংরক্ষিত থাকিবে। মেধাতাম পূরণ করা যাইবে।

ভর্তির অন্তর্ভুক্ত ব্যক্তিগত প্রয়োজন হচ্ছে।

বাংলাদেশের যে কেন স্থীরত শিক্ষাবোর্ড/মদ্রাসা বোর্ড (কোরিগরী শিক্ষা বোর্ড বার্তিত) অথবা দেশের বাইরের যে কেন স্থীরত বোর্ড/বিশ্ববিদ্যালয় হচ্ছে এস.এস.সি./দাখিল এবং এইচ.এস.সি./আলাম পরীক্ষার বিভাগে ফিজিঝিল, বেমিস্টিং, বায়োলজি সহ উভয় পরীক্ষায় মোট জিপিএ কমপক্ষে ৮(আট) পয়েন্ট পাইতে হচ্ছে। এবং আলাদা ভাবে মুন্তাম জিপিএ ও, ৩,৫ পয়েন্ট থাকিবে। উপজাতী প্রার্থীদের ক্ষেত্রে মোট জিপিএ ৭(সাত) পয়েন্ট পাইতে হচ্ছে। এবং আলাদা ভাবে মুন্তাম জিপিএ ও, ৩,০ পয়েন্ট থাকিবে। যে সকল প্রার্থী ২০২২ সালের পূর্বে এস.এস.সি এবং ২০২৪ সালের পূর্বে এইচ.এস.সি পরীক্ষায় উত্তীর্ণ হয়েছেন, তাহাদের আবেদন করার প্রয়োজন নাই।

আবেদন করার নিয়মাবলীঃ অনলাইন আবেদন করিতে হচ্ছে। অনলাইনে আবেদন শুরুর পূর্বে আবেদন করিতে হচ্ছে। অনলাইনে আবেদন করিতে হচ্ছে। কোরিগরী শিক্ষা বোর্ড/বায়োলজি সহ উভয় পরীক্ষায় মোট জিপিএ কমপক্ষে ১০/১০।

অনলাইনে আবেদনের সময় আবেদনকারীর ছবি ও স্বাক্ষর (সর্বোচ্চ ৩০০kb, jpg), এবং বাংলাদেশের সীল ও স্বাক্ষর যুক্ত জমা দিয়ে জমা রাখিবে। অনলাইনে আবেদনের বিস্তারিত নির্দেশনা ওয়েবসাইটে দেখে যথাযথভাবে আবেদন প্রক্রিয়া সম্পন্ন করিতে হচ্ছে।

সময়সীমাঃ অনলাইন আবেদন শুরুর পূর্বে ১০/০১/২০২৬ ইং, আবেদনের শেষ সময় ২৮/০১/২০২৬ ইং (রাত ১২টা) পর্যন্ত।

প্রবেশপত্র সংস্থাঃ ২৯/০৩/২০২৬ ইং হইতে ০২/০৪/২০২৬ ইং (রাত ১২টা) পর্যন্ত।

ভর্তি পরীক্ষাঃ ০৩/০৪/২০২৬ ইং (ক্ষেত্রবাসী)। সকল ১০ ঘটিকায়।

ছান্দঃ ১) আগামোগো ও তালতালা সরকারী কলেজী স্কুল এবং মহিলা কলেজ ও ২) আগামোগো ও আদর্শ উচ্চ বিদ্যালয়, ঢাকা।

প্রবেশপত্র সংস্থার নিয়মাবলীঃ ভর্তি পরীক্ষার প্রয়োজন হচ্ছে। ভর্তি পরীক্ষার নিয়মাবলী প্রয়োজন হচ্ছে। ভর্তি পরীক্ষার নিয়মাবলী প্রয়োজন হচ্ছে।

পদবী বিজ্ঞান-৩০ নম্বর, রসায়ন-৩০ নম্বর ও জীববিজ্ঞান-৩০ নম্বর এবং ইংঞ্জিনিয়ারিং ও সাধারণ জ্ঞান-১০ নম্বর সর্বমোট ১০০(একশত) নম্বরের ভিত্তিতে এম সি কিউ পদ্ধতিতে পরীক্ষা অনুষ্ঠিত হচ্ছে। প্রত্যেক সঠিক উত্তরের জন্য ০১(এক) নম্বর এবং ভুল উত্তরের জন্য ০,২৫ নম্বর কর্তৃত করা হচ্ছে।

প্রার্থীদের প্রয়োজন হচ্ছে। প্রত্যেক সঠিক উত্তরের জন্য ০১(এক) নম্বর এবং কোর্স সমাপ্তির পরে ০১(এক) বছর ইন্টার্নশীপ প্রোগ্রাম গ্রহণ করিতে হচ্ছে। প্রত্যেক সঠিক উত্তরের জন্য ০,২৫ নম্বর কর্তৃত করা হচ্ছে।

ভর্তি পরীক্ষার নিয়মাবলীঃ প্রদর্শন করা হচ্ছে। প্রত্যেক সঠিক উত্তরের জন্য ০,২৫ নম্বর ক