

# UNBOWED

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SEGMENT 1

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# PEOPLE AND RIVERS

*will shape our tomorrow*

We are proud to present the first instalment of our five-part special supplement series, marking *The Daily Star*'s 35th anniversary. This segment delves into two forces that have defined Bangladesh's past and will shape its future: people and rivers.

Few countries are as deeply shaped by these two resources as Bangladesh. Both are extraordinary assets, and both pose profound challenges. Our rivers, wetlands and coastlines sustain agriculture, trade and life itself, even as floods, salinity, pollution and mismanagement threaten livelihoods. Our people—young, resilient and inventive—are the country's greatest strength, yet population pressure, inequality

and uneven access to opportunity continue to strain resources.

This special supplement examines these twin realities with care and urgency. It explores rivers as lifelines that sustain food systems, climate resilience, and economic activity, while also exposing communities to floods and erosion. It looks at people not merely as numbers, but as agents of change whose knowledge, labour and creativity can drive sustainable futures.

Across these pages, we present both possibilities and problems: policy gaps and local solutions, risks and resilience, neglect and hope. Shaping tomorrow requires recognising that people and rivers are deeply

intertwined—and that with thoughtful planning, inclusive governance and responsible use, Bangladesh can transform these enduring challenges into lasting strengths.

In this issue, experts from diverse fields have shared their insights. We extend our deepest gratitude to them for their thoughtful analyses. We also sincerely thank our readers and patrons who, over the past 35 years, have continued to inspire us to uphold our motto: *Your Right to Know*.

**Mahfuz Anam**  
Editor & Publisher



The Padma and its banks.

PHOTO: ANSAR UDDIN KHAN PATHAN