

## DEMAND FOR CENTRAL UNIVERSITY

## Dhaka grinds to halt as students block roads again

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

City dwellers suffered for a second consecutive day yesterday as students demanding the issuance of an ordinance for the proposed Dhaka Central University blocked the Science Lab and Technical intersections again.

The protests brought life in many parts of the capital to a standstill, particularly in areas surrounding the two key intersections, forcing commuters to abandon vehicles and walk long distances to reach their destinations.

Cars, buses and passengers remained stranded for hours despite police efforts to divert traffic through alternative routes.

Members of the Facebook group Traffic Alert posted warnings about blocked roads and shared photographs of severe gridlocks.

Witnesses said students of Dhaka College and Eden Mahila

College brought out a procession from their campuses and blocked the road at Science Lab around 1:00pm.

Around 1:30pm, a bus carrying students of Dhaka University arrived at the Science Lab intersection but was stopped by the protesters.



PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

An argument ensued between students on the bus and those blocking the road. About one and a half hours later, the college students allowed the DU bus to leave.

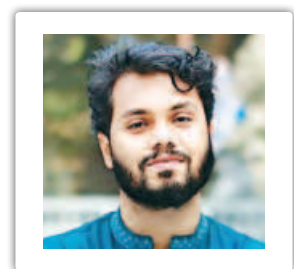
However, as the bus was

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PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

Pump machines and other equipment lie in a state of decay at the pump station in Hathirjheel's Rampura area due to negligence and a lack of proper maintenance. The machines remain without any protective shed, leaving them exposed to the elements. These pumps are used to facilitate water drainage, particularly during the monsoon. The photo was taken yesterday.



## Court orders further probe into Osman Hadi killing

## Inqilab Moncho to hold nationwide protests today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday directed the Criminal Investigation Department (CID) to conduct further investigation into a case filed over the killing of Inqilab Moncho spokesperson Sharif Osman Hadi.

Dhaka Additional Chief Metropolitan Magistrate Jashita Islam passed the order after accepting a no-confidence petition, said a sub-inspector working at the court.

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## US envoy vows to boost ties Presents credentials to president

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Newly-appointed US Ambassador to Bangladesh Brent



Christensen has said he looks forward to continuing to promote regional stability, economic growth and sovereignty of the two countries as he presented his credentials to President Mohammed Shahabuddin at Bangabhaban yesterday.

In a statement following the ceremony, Christensen said, "The United States is proud to call Bangladesh a friend. In over 50 years of partnership, we have worked together to promote regional stability, economic growth benefiting both our countries, and the sovereignty of our great nations. I look forward to continuing this work and further strengthening the US Bangladesh relationship."

Christensen previously served at the US embassy in Dhaka as a counselor for political and economic affairs between 2019 and 2021.

He formally joined the embassy as ambassador on January 12.

## NATIONAL POLLS

## BNP and Jamaat flag lack of level playing field

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Two major political parties, the BNP and Jamaat-e-Islami, yesterday raised concerns over the absence of a level playing field ahead of the February 12 polls.

BNP election steering committee spokesperson Mahdi Amin alleged that the level playing field was being eroded in multiple ways, increasing the risk of a controversial election.

Speaking at a press briefing at the party's Gulshan office, Mahdi said people expected every political party to receive equal opportunity through a level playing field, but recent developments suggested otherwise.

Mahdi alleged that a particular political party was repeatedly exploiting religious sentiments to gain political advantage.

"For example, media reports have shown voters being made to swear on the Holy Quran to vote for a particular symbol. This is a direct violation of the electoral code of conduct," he said.

He also alleged that the same party was going door to door to collect people's national identity card numbers and bKash numbers, indicating dishonest intentions.

Raising concerns over unequal treatment, Mahdi said several political parties were openly seeking votes for their candidates and symbols through various programmes and online platforms.

Meanwhile, Jamaat assistant general secretary Hamidur Rahman Azad, after meeting Chief Election Commissioner AMM Nasir Uddin, said there was no level playing field.

"Electoral parity is not being maintained here. On one side, violations of the code of conduct are taking place, but no action is taken. On the other side, those who are not violating the code are being harassed with fines, notices and other measures. We told the commission this must stop," he said.

Hamidur said the government continued to make reassuring statements, but these were not reflected in practice.

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## A step towards improving medical education quality

Dhaka, Suhrawardy medical colleges accredited for first time

TUNIN SHUBHRA ADHIKARY

Bangladesh has formally begun the accreditation process for medical education, with the Bangladesh Medical Education Accreditation Council (BMEAC) accrediting two government medical colleges for the first time to ensure quality education.

The statutory body has accredited the MBBS programmes of Dhaka Medical College and Shaheed Suhrawardy Medical College after the institutions met BMEAC standards, officials said.

BMEAC sent letters to the two colleges on January 12 informing them of the decision, BMEAC Registrar Prof Humayun Kabir Talukder told The Daily Star yesterday, describing the move as a milestone in improving and standardising medical education in the country.

BMEAC will formally issue accreditation certificates to the colleges for a period of five years soon, said Prof Humayun, adding that they granted the accreditation following the standard set by the World Federation for Medical Education for medical education.

The development comes at a time when over 100 public and private medical colleges provide medical education in the country, but the quality of education at many institutions has been questioned due to shortages of manpower, infrastructure, equipment and other facilities.

Against this backdrop, the health

ministry has cut 572 seats in government and private medical colleges for the 2025-26 academic session, citing inadequate infrastructure, manpower, hospital facilities and other shortcomings.

The accreditation council was established in April 2024 under the Bangladesh Medical Education



Both colleges receive 5-year accreditation

Accreditation letters sent on Jan 12

Move aims to standardise, improve medical edn quality

There are 37 govt, 66 private medical colleges

Accreditation Act 2023 and was reconstituted in October following the change of government in August that year.

Prof Humayun said the council follows a rigorous process to grant accreditation to medical colleges.

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## Neutrality of admin key to credible polls

## Speakers tell discussion

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Maintaining the neutrality of the administration will be key to holding a peaceful and credible election, political analysts said at a dialogue yesterday.

They said there were past efforts to influence the administration for political purposes, which had direct consequences on elections, and such practices must stop.

The dialogue, titled "Peaceful Election and Democratic Future", was organised by Bangladesh Enterprise Institute (BEI) at a city hotel.

Prof Rounaq Jahan, distinguished fellow of the Centre for Policy Dialogue, said, "The administration has been politicised for a long

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PROF ROUNAQ JAHAN, CPD distinguished fellow

time. If the administration can perform its duties without fear of its actions affecting promotions or postings, it will be able to function neutrally."

All political parties, therefore, should express their commitment to this, she said.

The major challenges surrounding the election include security concerns, especially for minority groups and women, she added.

Minority communities are perceived as a vote bank of the Awami League, and there are now pressures on them to vote for certain parties, creating a dilemma for the community, she added.

She also said differences of opinion are inherent in a democracy and must be respected.

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## JULY UPRISING CASES

## ICT presses charges against 47 over killings in Farmgate, Uttara

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The prosecution yesterday pressed formal charges in two crimes against humanity cases over the killing of 14 people and the injury of dozens during the July uprising in Dhaka's Farmgate and Uttara areas, accusing 47 people.

The International Crimes Tribunal-1 issued arrest warrants against the absconding accused and directed the authorities to execute the warrants and submit a report on January 21.

The three-member tribunal, chaired by Justice Md Golam Mortuza Mozumder, also ordered the production of nine accused currently in custody on the same date.

The accused include former home minister Asaduzzaman Khan Kamal, former Awami League lawmaker from Uttara Mohammad Habib Hasan, former Dhaka Metropolitan Police commissioner Habibur Rahman, joint commissioner Biplob Kumar Sarkar and former DMP Uttara division deputy commissioner Kazi Ashraful Azim.

In the case over the killing of three people - Golam Nafiz, Tahidul Islam and Ramiz Uddin Ahmed Rupa - and

the serious injury of four others in Farmgate and adjoining Tejaon areas, the prosecution accused 22 AL activists and police personnel.

The prosecution disclosed the identities of eight accused: Asaduzzaman Khan Kamal; Habibur Rahman; Biplob Kumar Sarkar; additional deputy commissioners Hafiz Al Faruq, Rubaiyat Zaman and Sachin Moulik; former Tejaon police station OC Mohammad Mohsin; and former DNCC councillor Faridur Rahman Khan Iran.

In the second case, over the killing of 11 people and the injury of dozens in Uttara, the prosecution pressed formal charges against 26 accused on two counts.

According to the first charge, on July 18, 2024, police members and armed AL activists opened fire on unarmed protesters on the Dhaka-Mymensingh highway and adjoining areas, killing at least seven people, including Mir Mahfuzur Rahman Mughdho and Sajeb Sarkar, and seriously injuring many others.

Mughdho, an MBA student of Bangladesh University of Professionals, was shot dead in Uttara's Sector 3 while helping injured protesters and distributing

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## Defence seeks discharge of Joy, Palak

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A state-appointed defence counsel yesterday told the International Crimes Tribunal-1 that Sajeb Wazed Joy was falsely implicated in a crimes against humanity case to prevent his return to the country.

During the charge hearing, defence lawyer Monjur Alam sought Joy's discharge, claiming the charges were baseless and that the prosecution had failed to submit any documentary evidence in support of the allegations.

"Since Joy is the son of a former prime minister, there is a possibility of his return to politics in Bangladesh in the future, and that is why he has been made an accused to tarnish his image," Monjur told journalists after the proceedings.

Joy, the son of deposed prime minister Sheikh Hasina, served as her ICT adviser. He and former state minister for ICT Zunaid Ahmed Palak were named as accused in a case filed over alleged crimes against humanity committed during the July 2024 mass uprising.

The prosecution brought three charges against Joy and Palak, accusing them of inciting violent crackdowns on protesters, during which more than 1,400 people were killed and over 25,000 injured; ordering internet shutdowns to conceal the atrocities; and directing law enforcement agencies and ruling party cadres to open fire on demonstrators.

The defence lawyer said his client had been appointed as an honorary adviser and had no authority

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মোটরযানের এক্সেল লোড নিয়ন্ত্রণ সংক্রান্ত

**জরুরী গণবিজ্ঞপ্তি**

এতদ্বারা সংশ্লিষ্ট সকলের অবগতির জন্য জানানো যাচ্ছে যে, অতিরিক্ত ওজন বহনে স্ট্র মহাসড়কের ক্ষতিগ্রহণ ও সরকারী সম্পদ রক্ষার্থে সরকারী নীতিমালা এবং উর্ধ্বতন কর্তৃপক্ষের সদয় নির্দেশক্রমে ঢাকা(মিরপুর)- উত্তরা- পাটুরিয়া জাতীয় মহাসড়ক (এন-৫) এর ৪১তম কিমিঃ এ অবস্থিত বাথুশী এক্সেল লোড কন্ট্রোল স্টেশনটি আগামী ২২ জানুয়ারী ২০২৬ খ্রিঃ হতে পরিচালনা করা হবে। এ লক্ষ্যে সড়ক পরিবহন ও মহাসড়ক বিভাগ কর্তৃক গৃহীত সিদ্ধান্ত মোতাবেক উক্ত মহাসড়কে চলাচলকারী মোটরযানের অনুমোদিত সর্বোচ্চ নিম্নেবর্ণিত ওজনসীমা (যানবাহন ও মালামালসহ) মেনে চলার জন্য অনুরোধ জানানো যাচ্ছে।

ক্রমিক নং	এক্সেল সংখ্যা	চাকার সংখ্যা	সর্বোচ্চ ওজনসীমা
০১	২ এক্সেল	৬ চাকা	২২ টন
০২	৩ এক্সেল	১০ চাকা	৩০ টন
০৩	৪ এক্সেল	১৪ চাকা	৪০ টন
০৪	৫ এক্সেল	১৮ চাকা	৪৭ টন
০৫	৬ এক্সেল	২২ চাকা	৪৯ টন
০৬	৭ এক্সেল	২৬ চাকা	৫২ টন

প্রসঙ্গত উল্লেখ্য যে, বর্ণিত ওজনসীমার অতিরিক্ত ওজন বহনকারী যানবাহনকে অনিবার্ণ কোন কারণে উৎসে ফেরত পাঠানো সম্ভব না হলে ২২ জানুয়ারী ২০২৬ খ্রিঃ হতে নিম্নোক্ত হারে জরিমানা আরোপ কার্যকর করা হবে:-

- ১ম টন বা এর ভগ্নাংশের জন্য ৫,০০০/- (পাঁচ হাজার) টাকা
- পরবর্তী প্রতিটন বা এর ভগ্নাংশের জন্য ১০,০০০/- (দশ হাজার) টাকা

উপরোক্ত নির্দেশনা/ সিদ্ধান্ত বাস্তবায়নে সংশ্লিষ্ট সকলকে সার্বিক সহযোগিতা প্রদানের জন্য বিনীত অনুরোধ করা হলো।

অনুরোধক্রমে,  
নির্বাহী প্রকৌশলী, সওজ  
সড়ক বিভাগ, মাদিকার।