

MANIFESTO EXPECTATIONS

With the national election just 16 days away, political parties are finalising their manifestos. The Daily Star spoke to young people to identify issues that should top the agenda for parties

Safety, freedom and job on young voters' mind

ARAFAT RAHAMAN

Young voters want political parties to put citizens' safety and security at the core of their election manifestos, with a special focus on safeguarding freedom of expression and protecting the rights of minority communities.

They also wish to hear clear and credible commitments to create decent jobs, curb extortion, rein in soaring prices, and ensure a justice system that works for all.

The Daily Star spoke to more than a dozen students from colleges, public and private universities, madrasas, and polytechnic institutes, as well as young professionals, to better understand their expectations and priorities

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In the run-up to February 12 polls, Shakeel Anwar visits outlying constituencies to hear directly from voters about their hopes, demands and expectations.

The 'youth vote', from the ground

SHAKEEL ANWAR,
from Begum Rokeya
University, Rangpur



I went to Begum Rokeya University in Rangpur on Saturday with a simple question in mind: what do the students who shook Bangladesh's politics in 2024 think of the election now approaching on February 12, 2026?

If anyone claims that the coming election is a direct outcome of the student movement of July 2024, it would be hard to disagree. Had that movement failed,

YOUNG VOTERS' EXPECTATIONS

- ⦿ An end to mob violence
- ⦿ Safeguarding freedom of expression
- ⦿ Curbing corruption and extortion
- ⦿ Stronger health and education systems
- ⦿ Protection of minority communities
- ⦿ A fair and impartial justice system
- ⦿ Employment opportunities, fair recruitment

POLLS DUTY Exercise 'maximum caution'

CA asks armed forces

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus advised the armed forces to exercise "maximum caution" so that even a minor deviation does not undermine public trust during the February 12 referendum and the national election.

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there would have been no question of an election at all.

Yet, 18 months later, the students who turned a protest against job quotas into a nationwide uprising are no longer on the streets. They are watching campaigns, listening to promises and judging quietly.

I sat down with three students who were active during the movement: Bayezid Bostami from the Department of English; Mustansir Muaz, a third-

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Adani deal pegged to S Alam's flawed contract

Finds national committee on power, energy sector

ASIFUR RAHMAN

When the lop-sided deal with Adani was signed, a newly inked deal with the controversial S Alam Group's power plant was used as the pricing benchmark -- even though that contract's pricing structure was itself unusually expensive and riddled with contractual anomalies.

The deal with SS Power was a "compromised" one and a project architecture characterised by severe fiscal asymmetries that disproportionately favoured the joint venture of S Alam Group, said the final report of the national committee to review unsolicited power contracts signed during the Awami League regime.

Chattogram-based S Alam Group was a major beneficiary of the ousted Awami League regime.

- Contract designed to guarantee profits for investor
- Risks transferred to govt, PDB
- Opaque pricing of coal
- Agreement for one unit carried over to second unit
- Annual capacity payment of \$428m, \$10.6b over the lifetime of contract

The investigation found that the project is designed to guarantee profits for the investor, protecting it from losses caused by market volatility, currency fluctuations and operational challenges, while shifting substantial sovereign, financial and operational risks onto the government and the Bangladesh Power Development Board (PDB).

"The SS Power I project serves as a definitive case study in how standard project finance structures can be engineered to systematically transfer risk to the sovereign while privatising returns," the report said.

The anomalies identified include the use of proxy freight formulas, fixed and indexed capacity payments, broad pass-through provisions and limits on sovereign rights -- suggesting the state's negotiating

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CHANKHARPUL KILLINGS
Ex-DMP chief
Habibur, two
others to die

5 cops get varying jail
terms; victims' families
unhappy with ICT verdict

SHARIFUL ISLAM and
SIRAJUL ISLAM RUBEL

Three former senior police officials, including ex-DMP commissioner Habibur Rahman, were sentenced to death yesterday for the killing of six people in Dhaka's Chankharpul area during the July uprising.

The three-member International Crimes Tribunal-1, headed by Justice Md Golam Mortuza Mozumder, also handed down varying jail terms to five other former policemen in the case.

Besides Habibur, the other two condemned are former DMP joint commissioner Sudip Kumar Chakraborty and former additional deputy commissioner Shah Alam Mohammad Akhterul Islam.

Meanwhile, former Ramna zone assistant commissioner Md Imrul was sentenced to six years' imprisonment; former Shahbagh Police Station inspector (operations) Arshad Hossain to four years; and constables Md Sujan Hossain, Imaz Hossain Imon and Md Nasirul Islam to three years' imprisonment each.

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CAMPAIGN
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আকিজ
এসেন্সিয়াল
সুগন্ধি চিনিপুঁত্তা চাল

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