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ইসলামী ব্যাংকিং সেবা প্রদানে 'ইসলামী ব্যাংকিং কর্ণার' পূবালী ব্যাংকের প্রায় সকল শাখা এবং উপশাখায়

Jamaat wants
Afghanistan-
style country

Fakhrul alleges

UNB, Thakurgaon

BNP
Secretary
General
Mirza
Fakhrul
Islam
Alamgir

yesterday alleged that Jamaat-e-Islami aims to turn Bangladesh into an Afghanistan-like state, raising concerns over the party's political agenda and its potential impact on national stability.

"They want to take Bangladesh backward. They are a party that prevents us from moving forward. We don't want to move backward; we want to move forward," he said while campaigning at Lalmia Market.

He also criticised Jamaat Ameer Shafiqur Rahman for his alleged controversial remarks about working women. SEE PAGE 9 COL 2



Speakers at a roundtable titled 'Electoral Commitments on Addressing Discrimination against Women and Rights in the Family' at BRAC Centre Inn in Mohakhali, Dhaka yesterday. The Embassy of Denmark, Bangladesh Legal Aid and Services Trust, The Daily Star, and the Centre for Policy Dialogue organised the programme.

PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON

Women's inclusion in
state systems key to justiceSay speakers at roundtable by Danish
embassy, BLAST, CPD, Star

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a roundtable yesterday urged strict enforcement of existing laws rather than introducing new ones, calling for swift and exemplary punishment for offenders to prevent violence against women.

They said effective implementation of even 60 percent of Bangladesh's existing laws would significantly reduce the need for new legislation.

Participants emphasised that justice cannot be achieved unless women are integrated at every level of the system – from law enforcement and healthcare to public services and the judiciary.

They called for balanced representation, ideally 60-40 or at least 55-45, warning that discussions without inclusion would bring little change.

The roundtable, titled "Electoral Commitments on Addressing Discrimination against Women and Rights in the Family," was held at BRAC Centre Inn in Mohakhali.

It was jointly organised by the Embassy of Denmark, Bangladesh Legal Aid and Services Trust (BLAST), The Daily Star, and

the Centre for Policy Dialogue.

In her opening remarks, CPD Executive Director Dr Fahmida Khatun highlighted gaps in law enforcement and victim support, particularly affecting marginalised groups such as persons with disabilities.

She stressed the need to align policy research with political commitment to secure lasting legislative reforms.

Moderated by Supreme Court lawyer Sara Hossain, the session questioned political party representatives on their plans to address violence against women, mobilise resources, improve access to family courts, tackle legal discrimination in families, and ensure women's representation in justice institutions.

Mahbuba Habiba, member of BNP media cell, said justice is impossible without women's integration into the system. She noted that structural barriers prevent effective enforcement of existing laws.

"Restoring victims to a reasonably normal life requires an urgently needed dedicated cell – already included in BNP's planning – where cases can be registered and addressed swiftly," she said.

SEE PAGE 9 COL 3

Policy reversals,
underfunding
hurting edn goals
Speakers tell dialogue

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Allocate 4-6 percent of GDP to education
- Form a task force to draft sector-wide plan
- Establish a permanent education commission
- Introduce universal mid-day meal programme
- Strengthen teacher capacity, status, recruitment

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

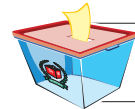
Bangladesh's education system is suffering from the absence of a long-term plan, frequent policy reversals, weak learning outcomes and chronic underinvestment, speakers said yesterday, warning that the country is falling behind on Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG-4).

The observations were made at a policy dialogue titled "SDG-4 progress and challenges in Bangladesh: Expectations from the next government", organised by the Campaign for Popular Education (CAMPE) at the Bangladesh Tourism Corporation auditorium in the capital.

Brac University Professor Emeritus Manzoor Ahmed said Bangladesh has operated for decades without a sector-wide education development plan.

"All governments have neglected education for the past 55 years," he said, arguing that reforms repeatedly fail because education is not treated as a priority in national planning.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 1



FEBRUARY 12 ELECTION | DHAKA-19

Labour rights, daily struggles
shaping election discourse

SHARIF M SHAFIQUE and SADI MUHAMMAD ALOK

A group of students were chatting at a tea stall on the Jahangirnagar University campus; their conversation centred on the upcoming national election.

They shared varied views on the electoral atmosphere, candidates, political parties, concerns, and their hopes for a post-election Bangladesh.

Many students of the university are voters in the Dhaka-19 constituency, which includes Savar and Ashulia.

The constituency comprises Shimulia, Dhamsona, Yearpur, Ashulia, Birulia, Pathalia, Savar Union, Savar Municipality, and Savar Cantonment.

Known for the garment industry and the Dhaka-Aricha Highway, the area holds major economic importance but has long been plagued by persistent problems.

Severe traffic congestion is a daily reality in Nabinagar, Baipail, and Savar Bus Stand.

Industrial waste has heavily polluted the Bangshi river and surrounding areas, while poor drainage causes waterlogging even after slight rainfall.

Furthermore, gas shortages for both industrial and residential use remain a consistent struggle.

As an industrial hub, the area also sees frequent criminal activities linked to transport, the jhut (garment scrap) trade, and land grabbing.

Any instability in the garment sector here affects national politics and the economy, making labour unions particularly influential in this region.

Khairul Mamun Mintu, a local garment workers' leader, told 'The Daily Star', "A large portion of voters in Dhaka-19 are workers. We discussed our demands on living standards and professional development with candidates and are now evaluating who addressed our rights."

"I haven't seen any clear programmes for workers in the candidates' manifestos," he added. "While many listened to us, heavyweight candidates did not seem to prioritise our demands."

According to locals, the main contenders are BNP's Dewan Mohammad Salahuddin, National Citizen Party (NCP) candidate Dilshana Parul – representing the Jamaat-led alliance – and Mohammad Faruk Khan of Islami Andolan Bangladesh.

Nabinagar, Baipail, Ashulia, and Savar Bus Stand areas are alive with campaign processions, banners, SEE PAGE 9 COL 1

Dilshana
ParulDewan Md
SalahuddinMJF unveils
a platform
for energy
transition

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A coalition of 33 organisations under the Manusher Jonno Foundation (MJF) yesterday launched the Women's Energy and Empowerment Network (WEE-NET), calling for women and marginalised communities to be placed at the centre of the country's energy policies and just transition plans.

The platform was unveiled at a press conference at the Dhaka Reporters Unity, where speakers said women continue to face structural exclusion from employment, decision-making and economic opportunities, an inequality they argued is being replicated in the energy sector.

On behalf of the platform, Wasir Rahman Tanmoy of MJF said women's labour force participation in Bangladesh SEE PAGE 4 COL 4

FACT-CHECKED

Out of context
videos manipulating
religious sentiment
Dismislab says voters being
mised ahead of polls

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

In recent weeks, several short video clips of political leaders' remarks on religion have gone viral on social media, triggering outrage and thousands of reactions labelling the speakers as "atheist" or "enemy of religion".

Media analysts and election observers warn that such videos are contributing to misinformation and could be used to manipulate voters.

Investigations show that while the videos were not technically altered, selective clipping and removal of context distorted their meaning and were strategically circulated ahead of the polls.

One such video featured BNP leader Habib-un-Nabi Khan Sohel. In the clip, he is heard saying, "People will be able to go and offer prayers at the Dhakeshwari temple, and priests of the temple will be able to perform puja at Baitul Mukarram when necessary."

Verification, however, shows this was not his full SEE PAGE 4 COL 6



The 25th convocation of East West University (EWU) was held on Aftabnagar playground in Dhaka yesterday. Bangladesh Public Service Commission Chairman Prof Mobasser Monem conferred degrees on the students. The convocation speaker was Tapan Chowdhury, managing director of Square Pharmaceuticals PLC. Prof Mohammed Farashuddin, chairperson of the Board of Trustees, EWU; and Prof Shams Rahman, vice chancellor, among others, spoke on the occasion.

PHOTO: COURTESY