

## Ekushey Boi Mela to begin on Feb 20

STAR REPORT

The month-long Amar Ekushey Boi Mela, organised by Bangla Academy, will start on February 20 this year.

Dr Md Selim Reza, member secretary of the Amar Ekushey Boi Mela 2026 Organising Committee, disclosed the information at a press conference yesterday at Bangla Academy's Shaheed Munier Chowdhury Auditorium.

Reading from a written statement, he said, "The fair is an inseparable part of the country's cultural heritage. However, due to practical reasons, it has not been possible to start the fair on February 1 this year like in previous years. The fair will begin on February 20."

Dr Reza added that stall rents have been reduced by 25 percent compared to last year following demands from publishers, adding that all preparations for the fair are complete.

"The government has allocated Suhrawardy Udyan for the fair. Construction of stalls is underway, and the schedules for discussions and cultural programmes have been finalised," he said.

Regarding stall allocation, he said that of the 527 institutions that participated last year and 53 new applicants, stalls have been allotted to all 527 previous participants and 24 new institutions due to space constraints.

He also addressed publishers' requests to postpone the fair until after Eid.

Bangla Academy Director General Mohammad Azam told journalists that arrangements have been made to accommodate Ramadan.



Pedestrians walk by an uncovered manhole near the Karwan Bazar Metro Station in the capital. This unsupervised state of the manhole, devoid of a safety barrier, can cause an accident. The photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

## Political will key to achieving Universal Health Coverage

Say experts policy dialogue

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Health experts and campaigners yesterday said poor governance and inadequate funding continue to challenge the health sector, and overcoming them to achieve Universal Health Coverage by 2030 will require strong political will from the next government.

They also said current health sector discussions focus mainly on curative services, while greater emphasis should be placed on preventive care and people's wellbeing, particularly amid the rising burden of non-communicable diseases.

Meanwhile, four political party leaders and representatives of affiliated doctors' associations said their parties have already outlined

plans to address these challenges and would implement them if voted to power.

They were speaking at a policy dialogue titled "Priority Health Reform Action Agenda: Bangladesh Road to Universal Health Coverage" at Dhaka Reporters Unity.

The Power and Participation Research Centre (PPRC) and the UHC Forum organised the dialogue with support from Unicef and Bangladesh Health Reporters Forum.

Aminul Hasan, member secretary of the UHC Forum, gave a detailed presentation on progress and challenges to achieve UHC, citing recent data.

He said Thailand introduced the Universal Coverage Scheme in 2002 and, due to sustained

political ownership, the scheme helped reduce out-of-pocket health expenditure from around 50 percent to nearly 10 percent.

The model is now being considered globally, he said.

He said that, according to service coverage indicators, Bangladesh's score stands at 54 out of 100, while the global average is 71. Bangladesh is also lagging behind the regional average, performing better than only Pakistan and Afghanistan in South Asia.

"So, Bangladesh has many things to do to achieve at least 80 percent of the UHC target by 2030," he said.

He emphasised reforms in governance and leadership, health financing, strengthening service

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## 348 Rohingya people held in Chattogram

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Chattogram

Law enforcement agencies detained 348 Rohingya individuals from the Dohazari area of Chandanaish upazila in Chattogram early yesterday.

A joint team comprising the Police, Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB), and the Army conducted a four-hour raid from 5:00am to 9:00am at the "Burma Colony" in Dohazari municipality, said police sources.

Chandanaish Police Station Officer-in-Charge Md Elias Khan told The Daily Star that the drive was part of heightened security measures to maintain law and order in crime-prone areas before the February 12 polls.

According to police sources, the joint forces searched over a hundred houses in the colony. Among the detainees are 176 men, 86 women, and 86 children and adolescents.

"The detainees were brought to the police station where their citizenship and camp addresses were scrutinised until Thursday afternoon," a police official said.

OC Elias Khan added that all 348 individuals have been confirmed as Rohingya refugees who had illegally left their designated camps in Cox's Bazar. "We are in the process of handing them over to the Refugee Relief and Repatriation Commissioner representatives..."

**PRAYER TIMING**  
FEBRUARY 6

Fajr	Juma	Asr	Maghrib	Esha
AZAN 5:30	12:30	4:15	5:52	7:15
JAMAAT 6:05	1:15	4:30	5:56	7:45

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

## Trade, defence deals aimed at easing path for next govt: Touhid

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

The trade and defence deals being signed at the far end of the interim government tenure are meant to make things easier for the next government, not to leave behind any burden, said Foreign Adviser Touhid Hossain yesterday.



He was speaking at the farewell interaction with the media at the foreign ministry.

On January 27, Bangladesh Air Force and China Electronics Technology Group Corporation International signed an agreement for establishing a drone manufacturing and assembly plant, as well as for technology transfer.

On February 3, Bangladesh and Japan signed a deal on the transfer of defence equipment and technology meant for the modernisation of the Bangladesh defence sector.

The two countries are also likely to sign an Economic Partnership Agreement with Japan today, while a trade deal with the US is expected before the election.

Referring to the trade negotiations with the US, Touhid Hossain said the interim government has been continuously engaged and moved things forward, which led to the reduction of the tariff to 20 percent from 37 percent.

## Govt sets Ramadan office hours

STAR REPORT

The government yesterday approved revised office hours for the upcoming month of Ramadan, setting the workday from 9:00am to 3:30pm for all public institutions.

The decision was taken at the Advisory Council's weekly meeting chaired by Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus.

Briefing reporters after the meeting at the Foreign Service Academy in Dhaka, Chief Adviser's Press Secretary Shahiqul Alam said the shortened schedule will apply throughout the fasting month.

Under the new arrangement, all government, semi-government, autonomous, and semi-autonomous offices will operate within the revised hours. A 15-minute prayer break will be observed from 1:00pm to 1:15pm.

## For Nurun Nahar, empowering women comes first

FROM PAGE 3

Another voter, Subela (pseudonym), pointed to shifting political loyalties. "People have always treated us as voters of a particular party."

This time, we do not even have our own candidate," she said, hinting at the absence of a former MP. "We will vote for you."

Having contested the 12th parliamentary election in 2024 and

earlier the upazila chairman election, Nurun Nahar is well known in the area. After her door-to-door drive, she addressed an election meeting at Adhardighi Haat.

Addressing the gathering, Nurun Nahar, daughter of a former union chairman and a native of the constituency, sought not only votes but active participation from residents.

She expressed regret

that her brief tenure as an MP from a reserved women's seat in the 12th Jatiya Sangsad limited her ability to deliver on planned work.

If elected, she pledged to improve law and order, create jobs for unemployed youths and establish industrial units, including garment factories.

She also outlined plans to empower women by promoting cottage industries, offering vocational training and building a skilled female workforce, alongside measures to ensure women's safety and prevent domestic violence.

Speaking to The Daily Star, she said she had received a positive response, particularly from women. "Having grown up with my father involved in politics and serving as an elected representative, I have been connected with the people from a young age," she said.

"I have no personal wants or needs. I have entered politics with the sole aim of serving the public."

Some locals, however, voiced caution. Golam Mostofa of Belhara village said, "This is the first time we have seen her carrying out public outreach. She

is known in the area, but the Jatiya Party's organisational structure is no longer as strong as it used to be. Managing such a large election will be difficult."

Other contenders in Thakurgaon-2 include Dr Abdus Salam (BNP), Abdul Hakim (Jamaat-led II-party alliance), Faruk Hossain (Ganadhikar Parishad), Nahid Rana (AB Party), Rezaul Karim (Islamic Andolan Bangladesh) and Sahab Uddin Ahmed (CPB).

The constituency comprising Baliadangi and Haripur upazilas and parts of Ranisankail has 340,049 voters.

**Land for Sale**  
26.50 katha land sale for Mohakhali Avenue. 50 katha land west Dhanmondi.  
No broker  
01969101858, 01915718450

**পাকী চাই**  
ডিক পদে (ইউনিয়ন) সরকারি কর্মকর্তার পুর (৩৭, ৪-৬) BBA ও MBA, ফুডবোর্ডের ৫ বছরের মাস্টার্স ডিপ্লোমা পেপারের পাস ও সুসমন্বিত পাসের জন্য শিক্ষিত, মজিষ্ট ও পারিবারিক মূল্যবোধবিশিষ্ট পাকী চাই। পর ডিগ্রি ও এক কন্যা স্থানান্তর জনক (মারের সাথে কনসেন্ট) সরাসরি: muhammad.islam.jobinusa@gmail.com

**Bangladesh Power Development Board**  
Directorate of Purchase  
Biddyt Bhaban (12th Floor), 1, Abdul Gani Road, Dhaka  
E-mail: dir.purchase@bpd.gov.bd  
www.bpd.gov.bd

### e-Tender Notice

The following e-Tenders are invited in the National e-GP System Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) for the procurement of:

Sl No	Tender ID No.	Package No.	Reference No.	Description of goods/works	Last selling date & time	Closing date and time	Opening date and time
01	ID-1219148	EE-GRL-10 (FY: 2025-26)	27.11.0000.304.26.216.26. Date: 03/02/2026	Supply of 15 Meter Steel Pole (650 daN & 550 daN)	11-Mar-2026, 17:00	12-Mar-2026, 14:00	12-Mar-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 System Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) is required. The fees for downloading the e-Tender documents from the National e-GP System Portal have to be deposited online through any registered bank branches. Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP System Portal and from e-GP help desk ([helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd](mailto:helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd)). For more details please contact to the PE's Support Desk (01768015538).

বিদ্যুৎ/৯৯-৬৯৯(২)/০৫/০২/২৬

**Md. Nannu Miah**  
ID No. 1-01304  
Director  
Directorate of Purchase  
BPDB, Dhaka

**TO-LET**  
Full Furnish with or without car From 15th February 2026 for Rent. Flat Area-2000 Sft. 3 Bed Room, Drawing, Dining, Kitchen & 1 Parking Flat No-A-1, 1st Floor, Monthly rent with Nissan Navana car-1,60,000/- or without car rent-80,000/-.  
House # 27, Road # 114, Gulshan-2 Dhaka-1212.  
01883117777, +61432115555, bodiur1@hotmail.com

**GROOM**  
SEEKING WELL-EDUCATED FROM A REPUTED UNIVERSITY, WELL-SETTLED IN DHAKA, LIBERAL-MINDED (IN RELIGION AND CULTURE) GROOM BETWEEN 35 TO 45 YEARS OLD, WHO VALUES COMPANIONSHIP, SUPPORTIVE AND BE SINCERE. GENUINE CANDIDATES ONLY.  
Email: roohi102000@yahoo.com

**বেসিক ব্যাংক পিএলসি**  
সহায়িত পথে মানবতার সান্তে  
শতভাগ রাষ্ট্র মালিকানাধীন বাণিজ্যিক ব্যাংক  
**বরিশাল শাখা স্থানান্তর**  
আরো উন্নত ব্যাংকিং সেবা প্রদানের লক্ষ্যে বেসিক ব্যাংক পিএলসি-এর বরিশাল শাখা, ০১ ফেব্রুয়ারী, ২০২৬ ইং (রবিবার) নতুন ঠিকানায় ব্যাংকিং কার্যক্রম শুরু করেছে।  
**পুরাতন ঠিকানা** | **বর্তমান ঠিকানা**  
উলফত শপিং কমপ্লেক্স  
হোল্ডিং নং-১০২  
চকবাজার রোড, ওয়ার্ড নং-০৯  
বরিশাল সিটি কর্পোরেশন  
থানাঃ কোতোয়ালী  
জেলাঃ বরিশাল।  
চন্দ্রদ্বীপ ভবন  
হোল্ডিং নং-৭৮৮, নতুন-১০৭৩  
মাগলানা এনায়তুল রহমান সড়ক  
ফলশক্তি, চকবাজার, ওয়ার্ড নং-০৯  
কোতোয়ালী থানা  
বরিশাল সদর, বরিশাল।  
সম্মানিত গ্রাহক, পৃষ্ঠপোষক ও জ্ঞানানুধ্যায়ীদের নতুন ঠিকানায় যোগাযোগ এবং ব্যাংকিং সেবা গ্রহণের জন্য অনুরোধ করা হলো।

**Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh**  
Department of Fisheries, Bangladesh  
Matshya Bhaban, Ramna, Dhaka.  
www.fisheries.gov.bd

Memo no: 33.02.0000.105.27.001.23-124 Date: 03.02.2026

**e-Tender Notice**

The following Tender has been published through e-GP system:

Sl. #	Tender ID #	Package Description
01	1219839	Supply and Installation of LCMS-MS machine with related services for Quality Control Laboratory, Department of Fisheries, Dhaka. Package No: DoF/Own/2025-2026/GD-01.

All others information are available in [www.eprocure.gov.bd](http://www.eprocure.gov.bd).

**(Dr. Fozlul Kabeer)**  
Deputy Director (General) (C. C.)  
Phone: 02-223387217  
Email: ddgeneral@fisheries.gov.bd

**Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh**  
Office of the Executive Engineer  
Education Engineering Department  
Narail  
www.eed.narail.gov.bd

**e-Tender Notice No. 113-13/2025-2026 Date: 05/02/2026**

e-Tender is invited in the National e-GP System Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) for the procurement of the following works under EED, Narail District as mentioned below.

Sl No.	Tender ID No.	Package No.	Identification of package	Procurement method	Tender document last selling date & time	Tender closing date & time
01	1194389	NARAIL/ENGG. COLLEGE/ 2025-26/WD-14	Construction of 10-Storeyed Academic Building (02) With 10-Storeyed Foundation including Sanitary, Water, Supply and Electrification Works at Narail Engineering College under Sadar Upazila Narail District.	OTM	08/03/2026 (16:00)	09/03/2026 (13:00)
02	1194391	NARAIL/ENGG. COLLEGE/ 2025-26/WD-18	Construction of 10-Storeyed Academic Building (03) with 10-Storeyed Foundation including Sanitary, Water, Supply and Electrification Works at Narail Engineering College under Sadar Upazila Narail District.	OTM	08/03/2026 (16:00)	09/03/2026 (13:00)

This is an online tender where only e-Tender will be acceptable in the National e-GP System Portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted. To submit e-Tender A1 renewed up to FY 2025-26 enlistment category contractor of Education Engineering Department under all district who are registered in the National e-GP System Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) will be eligible. The fees for downloading the e-Tender document from the National e-GP System Portal have to be deposited online through any registered bank's branches up to 12:00 on 09/03/2026. Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP System Portal and from e-GP help desk ([helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd](mailto:helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd)). The procuring entity reserves the right to accept or reject any or all tender(s) without assigning any reason whatsoever.

**Arunava Roy**  
Executive Engineer  
Education Engineering Department  
Narail