

Mohammad Badrul Ahsan's death anniversary observed

CITY DESK

The sixth death anniversary of Mohammad Ahsan, a longtime weekly columnist for The Daily Star and the publisher and editor of the now-defunct weekly magazine, First News, was observed yesterday, said a press release.



He also had a long career with Standard Chartered Bank, serving in both Dhaka and Dubai. A passionate writer, he left banking career to launch First News in 2010, the country's first and only news magazine.

Mohammad Badrul Ahsan, the inimitable weekly author of Cross Talk in The Daily Star, began writing his column in 2000. He also authored several books, including Grameen Bank and Muhammad Yunus, In Search of a Nation, and Tales from the Heart, published by Mowla Brothers.

His other works, such as A Good Man in the Woods and Other Essays, Crosstalk Essays, and The Parallax View, were published by The University Press Limited. His relatives, friends, and well-wishers are requested to pray for the salvation of the departed soul.



PHOTO: AZAHAR UDDIN

A mother and daughter harvest potatoes as her son looks on at Premtoli village of Bagmara upazila yesterday. With potato harvesting in full swing in Rajshahi, many farmers and their families are working themselves to avoid hiring labourers at Tk 500-600.

FEBRUARY 12 ELECTION

BNP, Jamaat campaign heats up in Ctg-9

Both focus on waterlogging, civic services, minority outreach

ARUN BIKASH DEY, Ctg

With less than a week to go before polling, electioneering has intensified in Chattogram-9 (Kotwali), as candidates from the BNP and Bangladesh Jamaat-e-Islami and stepped up mass contacts in the port city.

BNP candidate Mohammad Abu Sufian conducted campaign activities in the same constituency earlier this week, beginning from the Cheragi Pahar intersection in Ward 32 (Anderkilla).

Moving through Rajapukur Lane, Hazari Gali and Teribazar, he met traders and pedestrians and said voters in Chattogram-9 were eager for change.

"The people want to reclaim their voting rights after a long time," he told reporters.

Abu Sufian said his priorities, if elected, would include resolving waterlogging, ensuring security for traders and improving civic services.

Addressing a street rally, he said he had entered politics to represent ordinary

people and urged voters to cast their ballots freely on February 12, pledging to work for a liveable and peaceful Chattogram.

Meanwhile, Jamaat candidate Dr AKM Fazlul Hoque began campaigning in the Ishaker Pool area, engaging residents from

voters would gain by electing him, Dr Fazlul outlined a set of development pledges, including addressing chronic waterlogging and poor road conditions through coordination with the Chattogram City Corporation and the Chattogram Development Authority.

door-to-door campaigning and addressed a street rally, where he spoke of a political change following the February 12 election.

"We want to build a Bangladesh based on insaf [justice], where people of all religions - Hindus, Buddhists, Christians and Muslims - can live with dignity," he said.

A 'BELLWETHER' CONSTITUENCY
Chattogram 9, which houses key government offices, including the divisional commissioner's office and the court building, is considered a "bellwether" seat. Historically, the party winning this constituency has gone on to form the government, as seen in the elections of 1991, 1996, 2001 and 2008.

The constituency has 4,12,538 voters, with religious minorities forming a significant portion of the electorate in areas such as Jamal Khan, Patharghata and Anderkilla.

Acknowledging this, both candidates have recently reached out to minority communities, pledging security and equal rights for citizens of all faiths.



different professions, including rickshaw pullers, shopkeepers and small traders.

He urged voters to support the Scales symbol and vote "yes" in the referendum.

Asked by a local rickshaw-puller what



He also promised primary healthcare facilities in every ward and proposed developing a tourism zone along the Bakolia embankment.

Later, at Kalamia Bazar, he continued

Prioritise balanced development

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land allocation, financial support, and expanded public-private partnerships.

It also called for stronger social protection and healthcare coverage for poor and marginalised communities through social security and health cards, alongside agricultural cards.

According to IPD, the manifesto aims to establish a welfare state by reducing social and economic inequalities, ensuring transparent and accountable use of state resources, and integrating marginalised groups into the development process.

On environment and infrastructure, IPD demanded mandatory planning, environmental, and social impact assessments for all mega

projects, along with stricter punishment for land grabbing and environmental pollution.

It also recommended increased investment in renewable energy and the development of a multimodal public transport system, including rail, waterways, and mass transit.

The manifesto called for planned industrial and economic zones with worker-friendly housing, transport, and healthcare facilities, as well as special development plans for haor, char, hill, coastal, and river erosion-prone areas.

It also stressed empowering local governments and establishing planning courts to enforce environmental and land-use laws.

Speaking at the event,

Bangladesh Institute of Planners President Dr Mohammad Ariful Islam said development planning in Bangladesh remains fragmented, weakening the implementation of political commitments.

IPD adviser Prof Akhtar Mahmud highlighted the importance of inclusive planning and effective implementation to reduce development inequality, noting that optimal land use is critical in a densely populated country like Bangladesh.

Other speakers stressed the need for legal action against environmental offenders, climate-resilient agriculture, improved health and education services, bureaucratic reform, and data-driven, technology-based planning to ensure sustainable development.

He talks about

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backward again," he said. "We will not allow any attempt to rehabilitate fascists or re-establish hegemonic politics. We are prepared to resist such plans at any cost."

"Some speak of experience in running the country. But people of Bangladesh have seen that experience, and it was not a good one," he said.

He urged voters to go to polling stations without fear on February 12 and warned that anyone attempting vote-rigging or occupying polling centres would face consequences similar to those faced by "fascists".

Leasing out

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uninformed, calling it dangerous to justify handing over the port to foreign companies by citing local inefficiency.

He questioned whether the state would be able to take sovereign decisions during times of crisis if key infrastructure is outsourced.

Expressing concern over popular sovereignty, he said ports and sovereignty are inseparable, and bureaucrats cannot take unilateral decisions in the name of the state.

Speakers at the event alleged that projects built with port funds are being handed over to foreign companies, threatening jobs and national interest.

They claimed that leasing the NCT could put around 800 employees at risk and demanded full disclosure and an investigation into the proposed agreements, citing concerns over transparency and national security.

Communal harmony

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BNP candidate Abu Ashfaq said people are eager to vote after being unable to do so freely in the past three elections.

"Having served as upazila chairman for a long time, I have strong ties with people of all walks of life, especially the youth," he said, adding that his plans would reflect their opinions.

If elected, he pledged to eliminate terrorism, extortion and drugs, and to improve security and infrastructure.

Claiming strong support from women voters, he urged people to vote "for the force of independence".

Jamaat candidate Nazrul Islam said voters were ready to reject old leadership in favour of

change. "If the election is free and fair, I am optimistic about victory," he said.

Nazrul Islam added, "The youth are working closely with me, carrying the spirit of the July uprising. Besides, my opponents also know that a large portion of women voters will vote for me."

If elected, he promised improvements in roads, communication, and government hospitals, as well as the establishment of modern IT institutes to train local youth.

Both the candidates pledged to maintain peace and public safety.

The constituency has 545,140 voters - 276,050 men, 269,085 women and five hijra voters. In the previous election, the voter count stood at 513,609.

Ctg port staff resume strike from tomorrow

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Employees of Chattogram port yesterday announced they will resume indefinite work stoppage from tomorrow, accusing the Chittagong Port Authority (CPA) of backtracking on dialogue by seeking travel bans and asset probes against protest leaders.

The decision was taken at a meeting of the Chattogram Bandar Rokkha Sangram Parishad held at a club near Port Colony in the evening.

Following the meeting, agitating employees marched onto the road near Port Colony and burned an effigy of the CPA chairman at around 8:00pm.

Rumpa seeks change

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Rumpa completed her EMBA from Islamic University. She and her husband, a businessman by profession, have set up a garment factory in Patikabari of Kushtia Sadar upazila. Previously based in Dhaka, the couple now plans to settle permanently in their home area.

She claimed many voters have privately expressed interest in supporting her, with some promising to vote secretly. However, she said pressure from major parties prevents them from supporting her.

"Voters worry that if we fail to come to power, they may face problems or be deprived of benefits," she said. "But I am receiving a strong response from

women. They want a woman to represent them in parliament."

Asked whether she faces obstacles as a female candidate, Rumpa said reactions are mixed. "Some support me because I am a woman. Others use abusive language because they fear I might split votes from their preferred candidates."

Calling for political change, she argued that election funds should be used to create entrepreneurs rather than be wasted. She questioned how parties are managing to spend lakhs of taka for elections despite declaring recent financial struggles.

Her vision, she claimed, is to create entrepreneurs in every household, drawing inspiration from China.

"People from villages often have to travel to cities for training. I want teachers to go to villages and train people to become entrepreneurs," she said.

"China once went through a difficult economic phase, but entrepreneurs transformed the country. Now they have entrepreneurs in every household, while we are still running after jobs."

She also pledged to work on curbing environmental pollution and reopening Kushtia Sugar Mill and Mohini Mill. Standing tirelessly beside her on the campaign trail, Abdul Halim said his wife has always wanted to serve people. "If she can work for even one person," he said, "that will be our greatest achievement."

PRAYER TIMING					
FEBRUARY 7					
Fazr	Zohr	Asr	Maghrib	Esha	
AZAN 5:30	12:45	4:15	5:52	7:15	
JAMAAT 6:05	1:15	4:30	5:56	7:45	
SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION					

Bangladesh Rural Development Board (BRDB)
IRESPPW-2nd PHASE
Palli Bhaban, 5 Kawranbazar, Dhaka-1215.

Memo No:47.62.0000.966.07.022.25-70 Date: 05/02/2026

e-Tender Notice
Open Tendering Method (OTM)

e-Tenders are invited in the e-GP portal (www.eprocure.gov.bd) for the procurement of below mentioned works.

SL No	Tender ID	Name of Work	Online Tender Publication Date & Time	Tender last selling and closing Date and Time
1	Tender ID : 1218581	Printing & binding of different type of register & others	08/02/2026; 15:00	24/02/2026; 16:30 25/02/2026; 14:00

The interested persons/firms may visit the web site www.eprocure.gov.bd to get the details of the tender.

This is an online tender, where only e-Tenders will be accepted in the National e-GP portal and no offline/hard copy will be accepted. To submit e-Tender, please register on e-GP System (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>). Further Information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP system portal and from e-GP help desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd).

Mohammad Reshedul Alam
 Project Director

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