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US and Israel strike Iran

24 of Iran's 31 provinces hit, killing 201; Tehran retaliates with barrage of missiles at Israel, US targets across Middle East; attacks come amid talks

AGENCIES

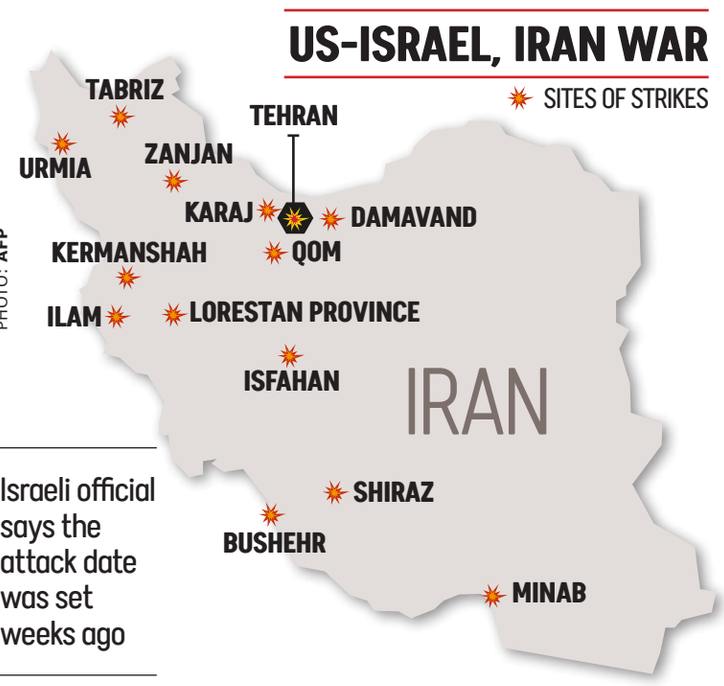
The United States and Israel launched strikes against Iran yesterday, sending columns of smoke rising over Tehran as the Islamic republic retaliated with barrages of missiles across the region.

The escalation by the US and Israel put the Middle East into a new conflict that President Donald Trump said would end a security threat to the US and give Iranians a chance to topple their rulers.

Tehran responded by launching missiles at Israel. Explosions also rang out in nearby oil-producing Gulf Arab countries, which said they had intercepted missiles from Iran after Tehran warned it would strike the region if it was attacked. Iran's missile salvo could be heard in Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Qatar, Kuwait and the UAE.

PHOTO: AFP

At least 85 killed in Israeli attack on a girl's school in Minab of Iran's Hormozgan province yesterday.



- Trump vows to "annihilate" Iran's navy, missile sites, urges Iranians to topple regime
- Iran says all sites involved in Israel-US ops 'legitimate targets'
- World warns against war; UNSC meeting called
- 'Iran defence minister, Guards commander killed'
- Khamenei moved to a secure location
- One killed in UAE; four in Syria
- Israeli official says the attack date was set weeks ago

When we are finished, take over your government.
Donald Trump tells Iranians

Regime change in Iran is mission impossible.
Abbas Araghchi Iranian FM

According to an Israeli defence official quoted by Reuters, the attacks had been planned for months, and the launch date decided weeks ago, even as the US and Iran carried out negotiations.

A spokesperson for Iran's Red Crescent Society told Mehr News Agency that US and Israeli attacks have hit 24 of Iran's 31 provinces, killing 201 people and injuring 747 people.

Meanwhile, the death toll from an attack on a school in southern Iran has risen to 85, the country's judiciary said. It was not clear whether the Red Crescent's death toll included the school casualties.

"The number of martyrs at the girls' school in Minab has increased to 85," the judiciary's Mizan Online website quoted the area's prosecutor's office as saying.

Israel reported two injuries, while the US military said no American casualties in the Iranian retaliation. The UAE

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WORLD WARNS AGAINST WAR, TRAVEL CHAOS GRIPS MIDDLE EAST -- PAGE 5

Protracted war can weaken Bangladesh's economy

Experts say country's energy security, exports, overseas jobs can be on the line

REFAYET ULLAH MIRDHA

The US-Iran war is poised to increase the prices of imported petroleum products, LNG and disrupt the supply chain of industrial raw materials.

"Bangladesh is always a victim of geo-political tension as the country is an importing nation," said Harun-Ur-Rashid, chairman of Bangladesh Container Shipping Association.

The overall macroeconomic stability may be affected, said Masrur Reaz, chairman of Policy Exchange, Bangladesh.

Firstly, both the price and supply of energy will be unstable for Bangladesh if the war continues, as the Middle East is the main import source for Bangladesh.

Such a situation will create a burden on the balance of payment and foreign exchange reserves.

Secondly, the main shipping artery of goods between Asia and Europe and partly the US, the Suez

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PHOTO: AFP

Smoke rises in the sky after blasts were heard in Manama, Bahrain.

Chaos at Dhaka airport as flights to ME halted

Migrants in Middle East in panic

MOHAMMAD JAMIL KHAN *and* SHAHEEN MOLLAH

Flights from Bangladesh to several Middle Eastern destinations have remained suspended since yesterday afternoon as some countries in the region temporarily closed their airspace due to US and Israel's strikes on Iran and Tehran's retaliation.

By the time the news of the flight suspensions spread, hundreds of passengers, mainly migrant workers, plus those travelling for business, Umrah or transit, started to crowd Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport (HSIA) in Dhaka, only to get stranded and face suffering.

International media reported that the US and Israel struck multiple locations in Iran, including capital Tehran. Iran later launched missile attacks on US military bases in several Middle Eastern countries.

In a notice, the HSIA authorities said Bahrain, Kuwait, Dubai and Qatar were among those who declared temporary airspace closures, forcing several commercial flights on affected routes to be cancelled, delayed or rescheduled.

The airport authorities directed the airlines to inform passengers in advance through SMS, email and call centres, ensure staff presence at the airport, and provide clear, coordinated information to minimise hardship.

Passengers planning to take the routes affected by the airspace closures were advised to urgently contact their respective airlines or travel agencies to verify flight status before heading to the airport. The Civil Aviation Authority of Bangladesh also issued similar instructions.

Group Captain SM Ragib Samad, executive director of HSIA, said authorities were closely monitoring the situation and sought coordinated cooperation from all concerned to ensure passenger safety and operational normalcy.

Biman Bangladesh Airlines has suspended all of its Middle East-bound flights due to Iran's ongoing strikes targeting US bases in the United Arab Emirates, Qatar, Kuwait and Bahrain, according to Bosra Islam, general manager (public relations) of the national carrier.

She said passengers travelling to the Middle East were requested not to come to the airport without prior communication. They can call 13636 to know their flight status, Bosra said, adding that safety remains the top priority and updates will be shared as the situation evolves.

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Woman, teen granddaughter killed in Pabna

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Pabna*

An elderly woman and her teenage granddaughter were allegedly killed by unidentified assailants in Bhabanipur village of Ishwardi upazila, Pabna, in the early hours of yesterday.

Police recovered the bodies of Sufia Begum Sufi, 70, and Jamila Khatun, 16, and sent them to the morgue of Pabna General Hospital for autopsy, said Md Mominuzzaman, officer-in-charge of Ishwardi Police Station.

Sufia was found dead inside their home, while Jamila's body was discovered in a field about 500 metres away, he said.

At the time of the incident, no other family members were present. Jamila lived with her father, Joynal Khan, and grandmother, while her mother, Shirina Begum, resides separately.

Neighbours told The Daily Star they went to the house after hearing a noise and found Sufia's body. Jamila was later found in the nearby field.

Speaking to journalists, Shirina alleged that a local youth had been stalking her daughter. "Her father had gone to Dhaka, and the criminals took that opportunity to carry out the attack," she said, demanding exemplary

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Hundreds of passengers were stranded at Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport in Dhaka last night as airlines suspended flights across the Middle East after the United States and Israel launched strikes on Iran earlier in the day. PHOTO: MEHEDI HASAN

Strengthen efforts to restore peace in ME

Dhaka urges int'l community

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

The government has expressed deep concern over the failure of the discussion process in the Middle East and the recent intensification of conflict.

It called upon the international community to strengthen efforts to restore peace and create an environment conducive to dialogue.

"Bangladesh reaffirms that respecting the sovereignty and geographical integrity of every country in the Middle East is essential," the Ministry of Foreign Affairs said in a statement following an emergency meeting last night.

The US and Israel have launched a major attack on Iran. In response, the Iranian regime has launched a wave of strikes across the Middle East, targeting several countries that host US military bases.

Foreign Minister Khalilur Rahman, State Minister for Foreign Affairs Shama Obaed Islam, Prime Minister's Adviser on Foreign Affairs Humayun Kabir and Foreign Secretary Asad Alam Siam held an emergency meeting to review the emerging situation.

During the meeting, they also spoke over the telephone with the head of the Bangladesh Mission in Tehran.

"It is our firm belief that conflict never brings a permanent solution; rather, the peaceful resolution of disputes is only possible through dialogue, mutual respect, and commitment to international law," the statement said.

Bangladesh called upon all parties to exercise maximum restraint, avoid further escalation and strengthen diplomatic efforts immediately.

The statement reiterated Bangladesh's consolidated and principled position in favour of peace, stability and security in the Middle East.

US and Israel strike Iran

FROM PAGE 1

reported one civilian dead in an Iranian attack, while four people were killed by a missile of unspecified origin in Syria, state media reported. Other Gulf nations reported injuries.

Countries around the world voiced fear of a Middle East conflagration after the escalation.

United Nations chief Antonio Guterres condemned "escalation" in the Middle East, on which the UN Security Council will hold an emergency meeting at 4:00pm (2100 GMT). France, China, Russia, Bahrain and Colombia each led a push for the extraordinary Saturday meeting, according to a diplomatic source.

The first wave of strikes in what the Pentagon named "OPERATION EPIC FURY" mainly targeted Iranian officials, a source familiar with the matter said.

An Israeli official said Iranian Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei and President Masoud Pezeshkian were both targeted, but the result of the strikes was not clear. A source with knowledge of the matter had earlier told Reuters that Khamenei was not in Tehran and had been transferred to a secure location.

An Iranian source close to the establishment said several senior commanders in Iran's Revolutionary Guards and political officials had been killed. Two sources familiar with Israel's military operations and one regional source claimed that Israeli attacks killed Iran's Defence Minister Amir Nasirzadeh and Revolutionary Guards commander Mohammed Pakpour.

However, Iran refuted the claims and said all high-ranking officials were 'alive'.

The renewed confrontation between Iran and its long-time foes dimmed hopes of a diplomatic solution to Tehran's nuclear dispute with the West. The latest indirect talks between the US and Iran this week failed to produce a breakthrough. The next talks were scheduled to start on Thursday.

The attacks came after Trump expressed frustration at Iran's stance in negotiations over its nuclear and missile programmes.

Trump said Washington's goal was "eliminating imminent threats" from Iran, and Israel's Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said the operation was to remove an "existential threat".

"We are going to destroy their missiles and raze their missile industry to the ground. It will be totally, again, obliterated. We're going to annihilate their navy," Trump said, warning of possible US casualties.

He also told Iranians the "hour of your freedom is at hand", urging them to rise up and "take over your government".

Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi, in reply, told Trump that regime change in Iran "is mission impossible"

Iran's Revolutionary Guards said all US bases and interests in the region were within Iran's reach and that the retaliation would continue until "the enemy is decisively defeated".

Iran's foreign minister told counterparts from Saudi Arabia, the UAE, Qatar, Kuwait, Bahrain and Iraq that Tehran would use all its defensive and military capabilities to defend itself.

Loud booms sounded in the United Arab Emirates capital Abu Dhabi, an oil producer and US ally. Fighter jets flew around the Yas Island area of Abu Dhabi yesterday afternoon, and blasts were heard in the country's business capital Dubai. Falling debris killed a Pakistani civilian in Abu Dhabi, authorities said.

Bahrain said the service center of the US Fifth Fleet had been subjected to a missile attack. Video footage from witnesses in Bahrain showed a thick grey plume of smoke rising from near the small island state's coastline as sirens wailed.

Fellow Gulf Arab state Qatar said it had downed all missiles targeting the country and that it had a right to respond. Sirens were later heard in the capital, Doha.

Saudi Arabia confirmed that Iran targeted the capital Riyadh and its eastern region with strikes.

In Kuwait, an Iranian missile attack

caused "significant damage" to the runway at an air base hosting Italian air force personnel member. A drone also struck Kuwait's international airport, the civil aviation authority said, causing minor injuries to several employees.

Jordan's armed forces said they had successfully intercepted 13 ballistic missiles since yesterday morning in an operation that resulted in damage but no casualties.

Explosions were heard near Iran's Kharg Island. Iran exports 90 percent of its crude oil via Kharg, for shipping through the narrow Strait of Hormuz.

Iran, Iraq, Kuwait, Syria, the UAE and Israel all closed their airspaces to civilian traffic, at least in part, and multiple airlines cancelled flights to the Middle East.

US embassies in the Gulf urged American citizens to take shelter, and in Lebanon, the embassy urged Americans to depart while commercial options were available.

The attacks raised the prospect of a rise in oil prices.

"If we don't see signs of de-escalation over the weekend, risk premiums could still drive Brent (crude) up by $10–$20/bbl (a barrel) on Monday," said Jorge Leon, head of geopolitical analysis at Rystad Energy.

Meanwhile, the Israeli army said about 200 fighter jets struck Iranian missile and air defense systems in western and central Iran. It described the operation as the "largest military flyover in the history" of its air force. The military said the fighter jets dropped hundreds of munitions targeting about 500 objectives, including aerial defense systems and missile launchers across several locations in Iran, simultaneously.

In a video message published on social media, Trump cited Washington's decades-old dispute with Iran, including the seizure of the 1979 US embassy in Tehran, when students held 52 Americans hostage for 444 days, as well as a range of other attacks the US has blamed on Iran since the 1979 Islamic revolution brought the clerics to power.

He urged Iranians to stay sheltered because "bombs will be dropping everywhere". But he also added: "When we are finished, take over your government. It will be yours to take. This will be probably your only chance for generations."

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said the joint US-Israeli attack "will create the conditions for the brave Iranian people to take their destiny into their own hands" and " remove the yoke of tyranny". Defence Minister Israel Katz called it a pre-emptive strike to remove threats to Israel.

The scope of the US air and sea operations was not immediately clear. The campaign is expected to last for multiple days, a US official said.

In Tehran, witnesses said people were rushing to banks to withdraw cash. Long queues formed at gas stations across cities. Many also worried about a potential internet blackout that would cut off communication with their families abroad.

Iraq's Iran-aligned armed group Kataib Hezbollah said it would soon attack US bases in the region.

The strikes, analysts say, proved that the June 2025 attack on Iran's nuclear facilities that Trump said obliterated those are not enough to prevent such attacks.

Since the resumption of talks, Iran's ballistic missile programme has been a significant sticking point, with Trump saying Tehran was developing long-range missiles that threaten the US.

"Our objective is to defend the American people by eliminating imminent threats from the Iranian regime," Trump said.

Protracted war can weaken

FROM PAGE 1

Canal, is very close to Iran and the war may affect the transportation of Bangladesh's exports to Europe and the US, he said.

Thirdly, Middle Eastern countries are the main labour market for Bangladesh and the long-term war may discourage them from recruiting more labour, Reaz added.

Since the local energy security plan has not been functioning well, the country is mainly dependent on the import of energy, said Mohammed Amirul Haque, managing director of Delta LPG and president of the LPG Operators Association of Bangladesh.

Any long-term war in the Middle East will invariably have a bad impact on the oil price, transportation of the LPG and availability of the LPG in the international markets, he said.

"If the war continues, we will be in a vulnerable situation," he added.

Long-term war will affect the shipping of goods from Bangladesh as the country has already reduced the shipping of goods through the Red Sea due to the Houthi attack earlier, Rashid said.

If Russia and China get involved in this war, the shipping of goods will suffer a lot, he added.

"Of course, we will have to face the impacts of the war, as we are an exporting country, especially the garment exporters," said Mahmud Hasan Khan, president of Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA).

For instance, the war will cut the budget of consumers as they will spend less on items such as garments.

Secondly, the oil price hike will increase the cost of production in the domestic markets, as Bangladesh is an energy-importing nation.

Thirdly, if the local exporters have to choose an alternative route for carrying goods to Europe and the US because of the war, the whole trade will be affected severely, he said.

Bangladeshi garment exporters thought that the Ukraine war will be over within two weeks, but the war has been going on for four years now.

So, if the US-Iran war continues for long, the export markets of Kuwait, Iraq, Iran, Bahrain, Saudi Arabia and other Middle Eastern countries may be affected severely, he added.

Bangladesh exported goods worth $10.9 million, mainly garment and pharmaceuticals, to Iran's $65 billion-market in fiscal 2024-25, according to data from the commerce ministry.

Chaos at Dhaka airport as flights to ME halted

FROM PAGE 1

US-Bangla Airlines has also suspended flights to Middle Eastern destinations, including Riyadh, Jeddah and Dammam, said its General Manager (Public Relations) Kamrul Islam.

Multiple airlines operate on Dhaka–Middle East routes -- among them Biman, US-Bangla, Emirates, Qatar Airways and Kuwait Airways -- carrying thousands of Bangladeshi expatriate workers and other passengers daily.

Airport officials noted that many flights from Dhaka, including those bound for London and Toronto, use Middle Eastern airspace. Airlines will now have to reroute services, potentially increasing travel time and operational costs.

PASSENGERS STRANDED

Suruj Mia, scheduled to fly to Saudi Arabia on a Biman flight departing at 2:30pm, said the aircraft took off but returned about an hour later after an announcement that it could not continue due to a "problem" in Arabia. The plane landed back in Dhaka around 4:30pm, and passengers remained onboard for another two hours before being told the flight would not operate.

"They said the flight will not go now and asked us to leave two mobile numbers and contact the place we bought the ticket from," Suruj said. He returned home to Bhaluka in Mymensingh after waiting outside the airport, adding that relatives had already informed people in his village that he had left for Saudi Arabia.

Outside the airport, a group of 18 people -- mostly women -- waited with their luggage. They said they were garment workers travelling to Jordan on work visas and had arrived from different parts of Joypurhat for a Sunday 6:00am flight, but received shifting instructions.

Rita Rani said she had taken three months of training to prepare for garment work abroad. "I came from Joypurhat. Others with me worked in factories in Dhaka, Narayanganj and Chattogram," she said.

According to them, Jazeera Airways initially asked them to report at 11:00pm, later changed the time to 3:00am, and eventually told them to wait. "They said if the war stops, the flight will depart. If not, they will tell us later what to do," Rita said. The group stayed outdoors as mosquitoes swarmed them.

Golam Noor from Brahmanbaria, returning to Dubai after three months' leave, said his MR Airlines flight could not operate due to trouble on the route. He fears that if the delay extends beyond three days, his visa may expire.

He said he would have to contact authorities within three days to extend the visa. "If I cannot return after coming on leave, I will fall into serious trouble," he said tearfully, adding that his family believes he has already left the country. He plans to stay at a hotel in Dhaka and contact his company by email and other means to seek an extension.

Shariful Hasan, associate director of Brac's Migration Programme and Youth Platform, said the fallout of conflict in the Middle East extends far beyond flight disruptions.

"It affects employment, the economy and remittances. Of our one crore expatriates, around 75 lakhs live in Middle Eastern countries such as Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Dubai and Abu Dhabi. The impact will depend on which direction the war takes," he told The Daily Star.

The expatriates' welfare and overseas employment ministry said the stranded passengers would be provided with overnight accommodation. It requested the passengers to contact the Expatriates' Welfare Desk or the lounge.

EMBASSY ADVISORIES

The Bangladesh embassy in Doha urged nationals in Qatar to remain indoors, avoid military installations and follow official instructions as tensions escalate.

In a notice, the mission advised expatriates to keep essential items ready -- cash, Qatar ID, health cards, medicines, mobile chargers and dry food -- and warned that sharing photos, videos or unverified information about the situation on social media could violate local laws.

Similar advisories were issued by Bangladesh missions in the UAE, Bahrain, Kuwait and Iraq, asking expatriates to prioritise safety, stay in secure locations and avoid unnecessary movement or gatherings until the situation stabilises. Citizens were specifically told to steer clear of military facilities and open areas.

In the Musaffah industrial zone of Abu Dhabi, several Bangladeshis spoke of fear and uncertainty following reported attacks near a US military base. Loud blast-like sounds were heard around 1:00pm local time, which residents believed were linked to interception activities.

"At first many people were outside looking at smoke in the sky. But after emergency alerts came to our phones, everyone quickly went inside," one expatriate told The Daily Star via WhatsApp, requesting anonymity due to restrictions on speaking to the media.

Another described widespread panic. "Everyone here is feeling scared. There is a sense of uncertainty," he said, adding that emergency messages advised residents to stay home and avoid looking out of windows.

A statement from the Bangladesh mission in Abu Dhabi reiterated: "Stay away from the vicinity of any military installations. Remain in your respective homes or safe places. Avoid going outside unless absolutely necessary until the danger has passed, especially avoiding areas under the open sky. Refrain from unnecessary gatherings." It also advised keeping Emirates ID, passport, medicines, mobile charger, power bank, water and dry food within reach.

Meanwhile, after an emergency meeting chaired by Foreign Minister Khailur Rahman, the foreign ministry said Bangladesh had taken steps to ensure the safety of its embassy premises in Tehran, its diplomats and staff, as well as Bangladeshi students in Iran. The government also expressed deep concern for the welfare of Bangladeshis across the Middle East.

The ministry urged Middle Eastern countries to allow stranded passengers, including workers, to enter once conditions improve, and said some governments had given assurances in this regard. Authorities have also taken measures to address the needs of stranded workers.

The missions shared emergency contacts for assistance:

Bangladesh Embassy, Abu Dhabi: +971 26 611 7215, +971 02 446 5100, +971 54 743 9392, +971 50 264 3396; Email: mission.abudhabi@mofa.gov.bd

Bangladesh Consulate General, Dubai: +971 50 816 8253, +971 50 816 8363; Email: mission.dubai@mofa.gov.bd

Bangladesh Embassy, Bahrain: +973 33375155; Email: mission.manama@mofa.gov.bd

Bangladesh Embassy, Iraq: +9647827883680 (WhatsApp); Email: mission.baghdad@mofa.gov.bd

Bangladesh Embassy, Kuwait: +965 69920013, +965 66516404, +965 50895161; Email: mission.kuwait@mofa.gov.bd.

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

PM for faster manifesto implementation

Attends office on weekly holiday

UNB, *Dhaka*

Prime Minister Tarique Rahman yesterday attended office on a public holiday and urged officials to expedite implementation of the government's election manifesto.

The move, similar to last week's holiday appearance, signals his push to maintain momentum in delivering key policy priorities.

Tarique arrived at the Prime Minister's Office in Tejgaon at 10:15am, said his Additional Press Secretary Atikur Rahman Rumon.

Rumon said the prime minister left his Gulshan residence in the morning and went to his office in Tejgaon, where he held a meeting with officials and staff members.

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Home Minister Salahuddin Ahmed, accompanied by The Daily Star Editor and Publisher Mahfuz Anam, inspects the fire-damaged floors of the newspaper's building during a visit yesterday. Foreign Minister Khalilur Rahman also visited The Daily Star yesterday.

PHOTO: **RASHED SHUMON**

Book fair yet to gain momentum

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The third day of the Amar Ekushey Book Fair yesterday saw a mix of slow sales and cautious optimism among publishers, as preparations continued alongside the impact of Ramadan.

Book lovers were seen moving from stall to stall in search of their preferred titles, while several stalls at the fairground were still under construction.

Publishers said overall sales so far have been "neither great, nor bad", expressing hope that both sales and footfall would increase in the coming days.

Compared to previous years, daytime visitor turnout remains relatively low amid Ramadan.

PHOTO: **MEHEDI HASAN**

Publishers said Ramadan has shifted the usual rhythm of the fair, particularly affecting visiting hours. However, they expect the fairground to become more vibrant over time.

Monirul Haque, owner of Ananya Prokashoni, said sales have not met expectations this year.

"People now have to return home before iftar. At night, there are Taraweeh prayers. So naturally, visitors are spending less time at the fair," he said.

Kawsar Ahmed Ashiq, manager of Prothoma Prokashon, echoed the sentiment.

"Because of Ramadan and other factors, sales may remain slightly subdued. However, we are hopeful that it will improve in the coming days," he said.

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NCP eyes stronger grassroots, more political gains

Says Nahid marking party's first anniversary

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

National Citizen Party Convener and Opposition Party Chief Whip Nahid Islam yesterday said the party's next goal is to strengthen its grassroots organisation to expand its political gains.

"We are not satisfied with winning six seats in the last election. We will work towards greater success in the future," he said, urging party leaders and activists to

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253 incidents of violence against women in Feb: MSF

UNB, *Dhaka*

The human rights situation across Bangladesh deteriorated further in February compared to January this year, particularly due to post-election violence, political arrests, violence against women and children, and border-related incidents, according to a report by Manabadhikar Shongskriti Foundation (MSF).

The findings were diclosed in MSF's Human Rights Situation Monitoring Report for February 2026, released yesterday.

Although no major violence was reported on Election Day on February 12, incidents of violence, casualties, politically and personally motivated attacks, clashes, violence against women, and arson occurred in different parts of the country following the announcement of the election and referendum results, said the report.

According to data published in the media and collected by MSF, a total of 799 people were victims of election-related violence in 136 incidents in February, leaving five people killed and 794 others injured.

Of the 136 incidents, 65 occurred before the election, leaving 385 people injured. On Election Day, 14 incidents were reported with 98 people injured.

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Speakers at the 13th episode of The Daily Star's 'Itihas Adda' at The Daily Star Centre yesterday.

PHOTO: **STAR**

Bangla must live beyond symbolic observance

Say speakers at Star Itihas Adda

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

As Bangladesh observes the enduring legacy of the Language Movement throughout February, conversations around Bangla often intensify -- sometimes emotionally, sometimes critically.

Scholars and writers, however, say safeguarding a language requires more than seasonal sentiment; it demands year-round practice, precision and responsibility from both institutions and individuals.

At the 13th episode of The Daily Star's "Itihas Adda", speakers said while Bangla faces no immediate threat of extinction, its "health" depends on how effectively it adapts to modern technology and is implemented at the state level.

Prof Dr Mohammad Asaduzzaman of the Department of Linguistics at Dhaka University said language cannot be confined to symbolic observance.

"We tend to become highly attentive to language during a particular month, sometimes overwhelmed with emotion. But language is not something we use only in February -- it is part of our daily life," he said.

He stressed that love and emotional attachment to Bangla must translate into consistent and correct usage. The continuity of discussion around language is equally important, he added.

"This conversation should not end by mid-March. Those involved in writing and editing, especially in newspapers, must treat this issue with importance throughout the year," he said.

Critiquing past state-led initiatives, Prof Shamima Sultana of the Bangla department at Jahangirnagar University highlighted inconsistencies in what was promoted as "Digital Bangla".

"A 2022 survey of government websites -- from the President's office to the Prime Minister's -- revealed widespread spelling errors. Even fundamental terms like 'freedom fighter' were incorrectly written. Despite spending crores on digitisation, there was a lack of sincerity in applying the language correctly," she said.

She also underscored the political nature of language, referring to the resurgence of certain terms during recent mass movements.

Words such as "Insaf" and "Inqilab", she noted, have reappeared in public discourse, sparking renewed debates over linguistic identity and notions of purity.

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403 students died by suicide last year

Says Aachol Foundation report

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

At least 403 students died by suicide in the country in 2025, with schoolchildren making up the largest share -- a total of 190 cases.

In the cases, the number of female students was higher, according to a survey by Aachol Foundation, an organisation working on suicide prevention and mental health awareness.

The findings of the study, titled "Student Suicides: A Growing Crisis", were presented at a press conference in Dhaka yesterday.

The survey shows that suicides among students rose from 310 in 2024 to 403 in 2025. The data was compiled by reviewing reports published in 165 local and national media outlets.

Findings show about 28 percent of the cases were linked to depression,

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মাননীয় প্রধানমন্ত্রী জনাব তারেক রহমান, বেসামরিক বিমান পরিবহন ও পর্যটন মন্ত্রনালয়ের মাননীয় মন্ত্রী আফরোজা খানম (রিতা), ও মাননীয় প্রতিমন্ত্রী এম রশিদুজ্জামান মিল্লাত মহোদয়ের দৃষ্টি আকর্ষণ

জনস্বার্থে বাংলাদেশ ট্রাভেল এজেন্সি নিবন্ধন ও নিয়ন্ত্রণ (সংশোধন) অধ্যাদেশ, ২০২৬ ও বেসামরিক বিমান চলাচল (সংশোধন) অধ্যাদেশ, ২০২৬ বাতিলের জন্য বিনীত আবেদন।

১) বাংলাদেশ ট্রাভেল এজেন্সি নিবন্ধন ও নিয়ন্ত্রণ (সংশোধন) অধ্যাদেশ, ২০২৬ কেন বাতিল করা প্রয়োজন।

ক) ট্রাভেল ইন্ডাষ্ট্রিতে বিজনেস টু বিজনেস (বি-টু-বি) অর্থাৎ এক ট্রাভেল এজেন্সির নিকট হইতে অন্য ট্রাভেল এজেন্সি টিকিট ক্রয়-বিক্রয় বিশ্বব্যাপী স্বীকৃত ব্যবসায়িক রীতি। বর্তমান সংশোধিত অধ্যাদেশে অন্তবর্তীকালীন সরকারের শেষ সময়ে অংশীজনের কোন মতামত গ্রহণ না করে বি-টু-বি ব্যবসাকে নিষিদ্ধ করা হয়েছে। এর পরপরই International Air Transport Association (IATA) গত ১৪ই জানুয়ারী ২০২৬ এক পত্রে এই অধ্যাদেশ সম্পর্কে বাংলাদেশকে সতর্ক করেছে। আন্তর্জাতিক মান, অনুশীলন ও বাজার ব্যবস্থাপনার সাথে বিপরীত কোন ধরনের আইন প্রনয়ণ করা থেকে বিরত থাকার জন্য অনুরোধ করেছে।

খ) দেশে বর্তমানে প্রায় ৬০০০ লাইসেন্সধারী ট্রাভেল এজেন্সি রয়েছে, যেখানে এক লাখের অধিক ব্যক্তি প্রত্যক্ষভাবে কর্মরত। ৫৫০০ এরও অধিক ছোট ট্রাভেল এজেন্সি ৩৫০টি IATA তালিকাভূক্ত বড় ট্রাভেল এজেন্সির উপর ব্যবসায়িকভাবে নির্ভরশীল। একটি ট্রাভেল এজেন্সিকে আয়াটার তালিকাভূক্ত হতে নূন্যতম ৩০ লক্ষ টাকা অগ্রিম জমা দিতে হয়, যা ছোট ট্রাভেল এজেন্সিগুলোর পক্ষে বেশ কঠিন। এমনকি বিমান বাংলাদেশ এয়ারলাইনসের টিকিট বিক্রির অনুমতি পেতেও একটি বড় অংকের অগ্রিম টাকা জমা দিতে হয়। ফলে ছোট ছোট ট্রাভেল এজেন্সিগুলি গত কয়েক দশক ধরে সারা পৃথিবীর অন্যান্য দেশের মত বাংলাদেশেও বড় ট্রাভেল এজেন্সির নিকট হতে টিকিট ক্রয় বিক্রয় করে ব্যবসা পরিচালনা করত। বর্তমান অধ্যাদেশে এক ট্রাভেল এজেন্সি অন্য ট্রাভেল এজেন্সি থেকে টিকিট ক্রয় বিক্রয় নিষিদ্ধ করার কারনে এই সেক্টরের সকল কর্মসংস্থান ঝুঁকির মধ্যে পড়েছে এবং অন্য দেশের ট্রাভেল এজেন্সিগুলো বাংলাদেশের বাজার দখল করে নিচ্ছে।

গ) বর্তমান অধ্যাদেশে মন্ত্রণালয় চাইলেই যে কোন সময় যেকোন ট্রাভেল এজেন্সির নিবন্ধন সনদ কোন শুনানি ব্যতিরেকে স্থগিত করতে পারে। এটি বাংলাদেশের সংবিধান অনুযায়ী ব্যক্তি ও প্রতিষ্ঠানের মৌলিক অধিকারের পরিপন্থি।

ঘ) বর্তমানে একটি ট্রাভেল এজেন্সির লাইসেন্স ফি প্রায় ৬২,০০০/- টাকা। অথচ পৃথিবীর অনেক দেশেই শুধুমাত্র ট্রেড লাইসেন্স দিয়েই ট্রাভেল এজেন্সির ব্যবসা করা যায়। বর্তমান অধ্যাদেশে নতুন করে অফলাইন ট্রাভেল এজেন্সির ব্যাংক গ্যারান্টি দশলক্ষ এবং অনলাইন ট্রাভেল এজেন্সির ক্ষেত্রে ব্যাংক গ্যারান্টি এক কোটি টাকা করা হয়েছে। পৃথিবীর কোথাও ট্রাভেল এজেন্সি লাইসেন্সের জন্য ব্যাংক গ্যারান্টি দেওয়ার কোন প্রচলন নেই। এত টাকা ব্যাংক গ্যারান্টি দিয়ে ছোট ট্রাভেল এজেন্সির জন্য ব্যবসা করা অসম্ভব হয়ে পড়বে।

২। বেসামরিক বিমান চলাচল (সংশোধন) অধ্যাদেশ, ২০২৬ কেন বাতিল করা প্রয়োজন।

ক) কোন দেশি-বিদেশি এয়ার অপারেটর ও বাংলাদেশ বেসামরিক বিমান চলাচল কর্তৃপক্ষের মতামত না নিয়ে বেসামরিক বিমান চলাচল (সংশোধন) অধ্যাদেশ, ২০২৬ জারি করা হয়েছে। এই অধ্যাদেশ বাস্তবায়িত হলে বাংলাদেশে বেসামরিক বিমান চলাচল ব্যবস্থাপনা দুর্বল হয়ে যাবে। এই অধ্যাদেশ আগামি ICAO অডিটে মারাত্মকভাবে বিরূপ প্রভাব ফেলতে পারে। যার ফলে বাংলাদেশ ICAO কর্তৃক Significant Safety/ Security Concern (SSC/SSEC) আরোপের সমূহ ঝুঁকিতে পড়তে পারে। বিভিন্ন রাষ্ট্র বাংলাদেশী এয়ারলাইনসকে নিষেধাজ্ঞা দিতে পারে, অনেক অনুমোদিত রুট বাতিল হতে পারে এবং নতুন আন্তর্জাতিক রুট চালু অসম্ভব হয়ে পড়বে। এছাড়া বাংলাদেশী বিমান সংস্থাগুলোর সাথে পৃথিবীর বিভিন্ন বিমান সংস্থার কোড শেয়ার ও ইন্টারলাইন চুক্তি বাতিল হতে পারে। বাংলাদেশী পাইলট ও প্রকৌশলীদের লাইসেন্স আন্তর্জাতিকভাবে গ্রহণযোগ্যতা হারাতে পারে। লিজে পরিচালিত বিমান প্রত্যাহারের হার বৃদ্ধি পাবে এবং নতুন লিজের বিমান প্রাপ্তি অসম্ভব হয়ে পড়বে। এরই ধারাবাহিকতায় অনেক দেশি বিদেশি বিমান সংস্থা তাদের পরিচালনা বন্ধ করে দিতে পারে। প্রভাব হিসেবে আন্তর্জাতিক ফ্লাইট সংখ্যা অনেকাংশে হ্রাস পাবে এবং বিমান ভাড়া বৃদ্ধি পাবে। পরিশেষে বাংলাদেশের বৈদেশিক কর্মসংস্থান, বিনিয়োগ ও আন্তর্জাতিক বাণিজ্য মারাত্মকভাবে ক্ষতিগ্রস্থ হবে।

খ) বেসরকারী বিমান চলাচল (সংশোধন) অধ্যাদেশ, ২০২৬ এ বিদেশি এয়ার অপারেটরদের জন্য সাধারন বিক্রয় প্রতিনিধি (জিএসএ) নিয়োগ বাধ্যতামূলক রাখার বিধান প্রত্যাহার করায় প্রত্যক্ষভাবে প্রায় বিশ হাজার স্থানীয় কর্মসংস্থান সংকুচিত হয়ে যাবে। পৃথিবীর উল্লেখযোগ্য বিমান পরিচালনাকারী দেশসমূহ জিএসএ বিধান বাধ্যতামূলক করছে, আর আমরা বাধ্যতামূলক জিএসএ বিধি বাতিল করে জাতীয় স্বার্থ বিকিয়ে দেওয়ার পরিকল্পনা করেছি।

এই অধ্যাদেশ দুটির মধ্য দিয়ে বাংলাদেশ আন্তর্জাতিক প্রথা ও চলমান অনুশীলন থেকে এতটাই বিচ্ছিন্ন হয়ে যাবে যে, বাংলাদেশের সক্ষমতা নিয়ে আন্তর্জাতিক মহলে একটি নেতিবাচক ধারণার জন্ম নিবে। বেসামরিক বিমান চলাচল, ট্রাভেল এজেন্সি ও পর্যটন খাতের যে কোন আইন আন্তর্জাতিক প্রথা ও মানদন্ডের সাথে অসামঞ্জস্যপূর্ণ হলে আমরা বাজার, কর্মসংস্থান ও রেমিট্যান্স হারাবো।

ট্রাভেল এজেন্সি, জিএসএ ও দেশি-বিদেশি এয়ার অপারেটর

FAMILY, FARMER CARDS

Cabinet Division warns against irregularities

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Cabinet Division has issued strict directives against any policy violations or financial transactions in the selection and distribution of the government's promised Family Cards and Agricultural Cards.

Deputy commissioners and upazila nirbahi officers have been instructed to remain vigilant, according to a directive sent to them yesterday.

The directive said that, in line with the government's election manifesto, the provision of "Family Cards" and "Farmer Cards" has been adopted as a priority programme to ensure protection of marginal and low-income families.

The cards will be issued to selected families based on set policies, regardless of religion, caste or creed. They will be distributed entirely free of charge under the government initiative.

No financial transaction can take place in the name of providing these cards, the directive said. If any such complaint is received, prompt legal action must be taken against those involved.

Meanwhile, guidelines for forming committees at the ward, union and upazila levels have already been sent to the field to ensure a transparent and impartial selection process.

PHOTO: COLLECTED

The women's wing of Jamaat-e-Islami formed a human chain in front of Jatiya Press Club yesterday, demanding an end to violence against women and children and exemplary punishment for those responsible.

Ensure justice for women, children

Demands Jamaat women's wing

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The women's wing of Jamaat-e-Islami formed a human chain in Dhaka yesterday, demanding an end to violence against women and children and exemplary punishment for those responsible.

The programme was held in front of the Jatiya Press Club, where the organisation placed a 10-point demand to ensure the safety of women and children.

Presiding over the event, Nurunnisa Siddika, secretary of Jamaat's women's wing,

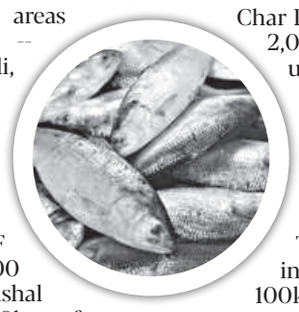
SEE PAGE 9 COL 1

Two-month ban on hilsa fishing starts

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Barishal*

A two-month fishing ban in five hilsa sanctuaries will take effect from midnight tonight, aiming to boost production and protect jatka, young hilsa less than 10 inches.

The restriction will cover 432 kilometres of riverine areas across six districts -- Barishal, Bhola, Patuakhali, Chandpur, Lakshmipur and Shariatpur, said Md Anisuzzaman, assistant director of the Divisional Fisheries Office in Barishal.



Under the VGF programme, 4,22,000 fishing families in Barishal division will receive 40kg of rice per month from February to May, amounting to a total of 160kg per family.

Barishal District Fisheries Officer Sanjib Sanyamat said 44,736 fishers in the district will receive 7,157 tonnes of VGF rice. "In the district, 83 kilometres of river in Sadar and Mehendiganj upazilas have been declared sanctuaries prohibiting fishing activities," he added.

In Bhola, the ban will apply to 190 kilometres of the Meghna and Tetulia rivers for two months -- 90 kilometres of the Meghna River from Char Ilisha to Char Pial and 100 kilometres of the Tetulia River from Char Bheduria to Char Rustam -- affecting nearly 2,00,000 fishers across seven upazilas.

With Eid-ul-Fitr approaching, many fishers expressed concern over repaying NGO and cooperative loans during the ban. They demanded loan instalments be deferred, 100kg of rice per family, and inclusion of all registered fishers in the assistance programme.

"Almost every fisher here runs their household with loans from different cooperatives and NGOs. We are worried about how we will repay them during the ban," said Alauddin Majhi, a fisher from Bhola Sadar.

'Need stronger commitment to prioritise edn'

CAMPE calls for legal framework to implement 12-point agenda

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Campaign for Popular Education (CAMPE) yesterday urged the government to support its 12-point education agenda with a comprehensive legal framework, sustainable financing and review-based reforms.

At a press briefing at Jatiya Press Club, speakers said stronger political commitment was needed to prioritise education, while decisions must remain free from undue political influence. They added that implementation would be the real challenge.

CAMPE Executive Director Rasheda K Choudhury read out a written proposal submitted to the education ministry, saying education is recognised in the constitution as the responsibility of the state but not yet as a right of citizens.

DEMANDS

- Form a permanent edn commission
- Set up expert committee until commission in place
- Improve teachers' salaries, allowances
- Prioritise teachers' dev in reform initiatives

She reiterated the demand for a permanent education commission and suggested forming an expert committee until such a body is established. Teachers' status, salaries, allowances, dignity and professional development must be central to reforms, she said.

Responding to a question on the draft education law placed at the end of the interim government's tenure, she said the consultation process had been rushed. Reforms, including setting minimum standards and addressing guidebooks and coaching, would require a comprehensive education law to establish education as a right, she added.

Professor Emeritus at Brac University Manzoor Ahmed said education commissions had repeatedly advised against public examinations at early grades.

Calling the government's agenda reflective of long-discussed concerns but not a full roadmap, he

SEE PAGE 9 COL 1

BNP man beaten to death 'by rivals'

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Rajshahi*

A BNP activist was beaten to death allegedly by supporters of a rival faction in Charghat upazila of Rajshahi on Friday night.

The deceased was Ershad Ali, 65, a Yusufpur union BNP member and follower of Rajshahi-6 lawmaker Abu Sayeed Chand, said locals. He was attacked around 9:30pm in Sipaipara village.

Charghat Police Station Sub-inspector Sirajul Islam said the accused are followers of Anwar Hossain Uzzal, a former district BNP vice-president who had sought the party nomination for the same constituency.

Tension flared after Juma prayers over a disagreement on who would be chief guest at a gathering -- Uzzal or MP Chand. Later, while returning home after Taraweeh, Ershad was attacked by several men who beat him with sticks, killing him.

Uzzal could not be contacted for comments.

The body was sent to Rajshahi Medical College morgue. Police are trying to arrest the accused, who fled after the incident.

Man killed over mosque fund dispute

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Sylhet*

A man was killed in a clash between two groups over mosque funds in Chhatak upazila of Sunamganj yesterday.

The deceased is Fazal Miah, 50, of Puran Noapara village.

Mizanur Rahman, officer-in-charge of Chhatak Police Station, confirmed the incident and said Fazal's body was sent to Sunamganj District Hospital for autopsy.

He said there had been a longstanding dispute between Mashuk Miah and Fazal over the mosque management committee.

Around noon, the two became involved in an altercation over the mosque funds, which led to a clash between their supporters using local weapons.

At one stage, Fazal was critically injured and died on the way to hospital, the OC said.

We Remember

20.09.33 - 1.3.2003

On his 23rd death anniversary today, we profoundly remember late **Matiur Rahman**- a Freedom Fighter, Founder & Chairman of Kisan Group, Former Cabinet Minister and former President of Dhaka Chamber of commerce & Industries.

Charity lunches will be served today at orphanage. Please pray for the salvation of his departed soul.

Chondona, Robin, Shuvo & Amit
&
Members of Kisan Group
mrahmanfamily@gmail.com

APARTMENT FOR RENT IN GULSHAN-1

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Contact: 01772-118836, 01711-680466, 01613-060942, 01711-784005

Office Of The Director Planning and Development
University Of Barishal
Karnakhati, Barishal Sader, Barishal
☎0431-2177765, Email:directoreplanning@bu.ac.bd,web: www.bu.ac.bd

Memo No: BU/P & D/OFFICE EQUIPT./e-GP TENDER/2025-26/121-11 Date:26/02/2026

Invitation for e-Tender (OTM)

e-Tenders is invited in the National e-GP system portal (http://www.eprocure.gov.bd) for the procurement of the following goods under the Revenue Budget of University of Barishal.

SL. No.	Tender/ Proposal ID No.	Invitation Reference No.	Name of works	Tendering Method	Tender/ Proposal Publication & Opening Date and Time	Tender/ Proposal Document last selling & Security Submission Date and Time
01	1236104	BU/P & D/OFFICE EQUIPT./e-GP TENDER/2025-26/121-11	Supply of 03 types of office equipment for University of Barishal	OTM	01-Mar-2026 09:00 & 12-Mar-2026 15:30	12-Mar-2026 12:00 & 15-Mar-2026 13:00

This is an online Tender, where only e-Tenders 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 Document from the National e-GP System portal have to be deposited online through any registered Bank's branches.

Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP System Portal and from e-GP help desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd).

(Md. Humayun Kabir)
Director
Planning and Devlopment Office
University of Barishal
E-mail : hkabirbslbd1999@gmail.com
Mobile Number: 01781334070

GD-433

Bangladesh Red Crescent Society
National Head Quarter (NHQ)
684-686, Red Crescent Sarak, Bara Moghbazar, Dhaka 1217.
PABX: +88-02-48310188-9, Ext: 222, 258, Direct: +88-02-48316602, Web: www.bdrcs.org

INVITATION FOR TENDER

1. Invitation Reference, Tender ID No, and Date	Ref. No. Pro- (Log.) 51/2026, Tender ID: 13/2026, 26/02/2026
2. Procuring Entity Name	Secretary General, BDRCS
3. Name of Requisition Department	DCRM Department, National Headquarters, BDRCS,684-686 Red Crescent Road, Bara Maghbazar, Dhaka-1217.
4. Implementation by	DCRM and Estate Department, National Headquarters, BDRCS, 684-686 Red Crescent Road, Bara Maghbazar, Dhaka-1217.
5. Budget and Source of Funds	British Red Cross (BRC), CCA Project in Narayanganj District.
6. Invitation for	**"Construction of House Hold Latrine at Community Level in Narayanganj District, DCRM Department".**
7. Procurement Method	Open Tendering Method, OTM (Two Envelope)
8. Detali	**"Construction of of House Hold Latrine at Community Level in Narayanganj District, DCRM Department",** (1) PART-A: Civil Work - 25 Sets (2) PART-B: Plumbing Work-25 sets & C: Sanitary Work-25 sets at Shumilpara and Char Shimulpara Ward-06, Narayanganj District.
9. Purchase of Tender document	Tender documents and schedules with detailed information are available at the Bangladesh Red Crescent Society (BDRCS) website: www.bdrcs.org. Tender Schedule Download Link: https://bdrcs.org/tender/ **Important Details:** • Interested bidders are requested to collect the tender documents within the stipulated timeframe from the mentioned link/BDRCS website. • A Tender Schedule purchase fee of **BDT 2000.00 (Two thousand taka only)** is applicable. This fee is non-refundable. • The purchase fee should be paid through **bKash** number **01894806393** (BDRCS Merchant Account). • Please mention the **bKash** transaction reference number on top of the tender schedule. • Failure to include the **bKash** transaction reference number may result in the disqualification of your bid.
10. Tender Schedule available from website/link	01-03-2026
11. Tender Closing Date and Time	15-03-2026 at 12:00 PM
12. Tender Opening Date and Time	15-03-2026 at 12:15 PM
13. Pre-bid Meeting Schedule	11-03-2025 at 10.00 AM at Logistics Dept. Meeting Room, NHQ, BDRCS
14. Price of Tender Document	BDT 2000.00 nonrefundable through bKash number **01894-806393.**
15. Tender Security Money	2.5 % of the Total quoted value.
16. Eligibility of Tenderer	As per tender documents.
17. Address of Tender Submission & Opening	Logistics Department Room, National Headquarters, BDRCS, 684-686 Red Crescent Road, Bara Maghbazar, Dhaka-1217.
18. Completion Time in months	As per tender documents.

The Bangladesh Red Crescent Society reserves the right to accept or reject any or all tender or split the order without assigning any reason whatsoever and will not be bound to accept the lowest bid

Dr. Kabir M. Ashraf Alam, ndc
Secretary General

Government of Peoples Republic of Bangladesh
Principal's Office
Institute of Health Technology, Sylhet.
E-mail: ihtsylhet@gmail.com

Memo No. 59.14.0000.208.07.0001.26.133 Date: 26/02/2026

e-Tender Notice

This is an online Tender, where only e-Tenders will be accepted in e-GP Portal and no offline/ Hard copies will be accepted. To submit e-tender, please register on e-GP system portal (https://www.eprocure.gov.bd), For more details, please contract support desk contract numbers.

e-Tender are invited in e-GP system portal (http://www.eprocure.gov.bd) by Dr. Moyazzam Ali khan Chowdhury, Principal, Institute of Health Technology, Sylhet for the Procurement of;

Tender Id	Name of Goods	Tender/Proposal Publication Date & Time	Tender/Proposal Last Selling Date & Time	Tender/Proposal Closing/ Opening Date & Time
1222272	Procurement of Others Stationary for the F.Y 2025-2026 at Institute of Health Technology, Sylhet	01-Mar-2026 12:00	15-Mar-2026 16:00	16-Mar-2026 16:00
1222273	Procurement of Furniture for the F.Y 2025-2026 at Institute of Health Technology, Sylhet	01-Mar-2026 12:00	15-Mar-2026 16:00	16-Mar-2026 16:00
1222274	Procurement of Sports Items for the F.Y 2025-2026 at Institute of Health Technology, Sylhet	01-Mar-2026 12:00	15-Mar-2026 16:00	16-Mar-2026 16:00
1222278	Procurement of Computer Accessories for the F.Y 2025-2026 at Institute of Health Technology, Sylhet	01-Mar-2026 12:00	15-Mar-2026 16:00	16-Mar-2026 16:00

e-Tender details can be downloaded on e-GP system portal (https://www.eprocure.gov.bd) for pursuer.

e-Tender will be accepted only as stated in above list; accepted tenders will be opened online immediate as stated in above list.

26.02.2026
(Dr. Moyazzam Ali khan Chowdhury)
Principal
Institute of Health Technology, Sylhet

GD-435

Cowater

ProNurse Project in Bangladesh
Cowater International Inc.
House-100 Road-25, Block-A
Banani, Dhaka-1213

PRONURSE

INVITATION FOR TENDER

Memo No: PRNGAC/Cowater/776/2026 Date: 01.03.2026

01.	Procuring Entity Name	Dr. Lubana Ahmed, Project Director, ProNurse Project
02.	Procurement Method	Open Tendering Method (OTM)
03.	Invitation for Tender	The Procuring entity invites tender for procurement of items of following description for Nurse Teachers Training Centre (NTTC), Mohakhali, Dhaka. in 3 (three) separate tenders
03.	Tender Name	1. Supply, installation, testing and commissioning of THREE PHASE Generator with ATS and Sound Attenuated Acoustically Treated Canopy. (Maximum sound level : 75 dBA at 7m distance in the generator room). 2. Supply and Installation of 640 Kg 08 Person capacity passenger Lift, complete system including all standard accessories. 3. Supply, installation, testing and commissioning of 11 kV HT Switchgear, 315 kVA Transformer, LT & ELT Switchgear, PFI Plant, ATS system including other related works.
06.	Price of Tender Document	Tk. 1,000/- (Taka One thousand) only for each single category of items. The original money receipt must be enclosed with the tender.
08.	Name and address of the Office selling, submission and opening of tender.	ProNurse Project, Cowater International House-100, Road-25, Banani, Dhaka.
12.	Tender submission and opening date and time.	Submission: 16.03.2026 up to 11.00 AM Opening: 16.03.2026 at 11.15 AM
15.	Contact details for tender clarification purpose	Telephone: 01819245607
16.	The Procuring Entity reserves the right to reject all the tenders or annul the tender proceedings at any stage of the tendering process.	

Dr. Lubana Ahmed
Project Director
ProNurse Project in Bangladesh
Cowater International

‘Iran attack is high risk, high reward’

Trump was told ahead of strikes

REUTERS, *WASHINGTON*

Ahead of the US attack on Iran, President Donald Trump received briefings that not only delivered blunt assessments about the risk of major US casualties but also touted the prospect of a generational shift in the Middle East in favour of US interests, a US official told Reuters.

The launch of what the Pentagon called “Operation Epic Fury” yesterday plunged the Middle East into a new and unpredictable conflict. The US and Israeli militaries struck sites across Iran, triggering retaliatory Iranian attacks against Israel and nearby Gulf Arab countries.

The official, who spoke on condition of anonymity, said the briefers described the operation to the president as a high-risk, high-reward scenario.

Trump himself appeared to echo that sentiment when he acknowledged the stakes at the onset of the operation, saying “the lives of courageous American heroes may be lost.”

“But we’re doing this not for now, we’re doing this for the future, and it is a noble mission,” Trump said in a video address announcing the start of major combat operations.

“For 47 years, the Iranian regime has chanted death to America and waged an unending campaign of bloodshed and mass murder ... We’re not gonna put up with it any longer.”

The briefings from Trump’s national security team help explain how the president decided to pursue arguably the riskiest US military operation since the invasion of Iraq in 2003.

Ahead of the strikes, Trump received multiple briefings from officials including CIA Director John Ratcliffe, US General Dan Caine, the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, US Secretary of State Marco Rubio and Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth.

On Thursday, Admiral Brad Cooper, who leads US forces in the Middle East as the head of Central Command, flew to Washington to join discussions in the White House Situation Room.

IRAN UNDER ATTACK

(Top) Satellite imagery from an alleged Israeli strike on the bunker where Iranian Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei was reportedly being guarded. (Left) Smoke rises following an explosion in Tehran. Vehicles burn in Tehran in this screengrab obtained from a social media video. US and Israeli attacks have hit 24 of Iran’s 31 provinces, killing 201 people and injuring 747.

PHOTOS: **REUTERS/AFP/AGENCIES**

Netanyahu says many signs that Khamenei ‘is no longer’

REUTERS, *Jerusalem*

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said on Saturday that there were many signs suggesting Iranian Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei may have been killed in Israeli-U.S. strikes in Iran.

“This morning we destroyed the compound of the tyrant Khamenei,” Netanyahu said in a video statement, adding that for more than 30 years Khamenei had “dispatched terrorism across the world, made his own people miserable, and worked constantly and tirelessly on a program to annihilate the state of Israel”.

“There are many signs that this tyrant is no longer. This morning we eliminated senior officials in the ayatollahs’ regime, Revolutionary Guards commanders, senior figures in the nuclear programme - and we will continue. In the next few days, we will hit thousands more targets of the terror regime,” Netanyahu said.

World warns against Mideast war as US-Iran conflict flares

AFP, *Paris*

Countries around the world voiced fear of a Middle East conflagration after the United States and Israel carried out strikes on Iran yesterday, triggering retaliation from Tehran, which targeted US bases in the region.

The United Nations’ human rights chief condemned the US-Israeli strikes and Iran’s response, warning further attacks “would only result in “death, destruction and human misery”.

“I call for restraint and implore all parties to see reason,” Volker Turk said in a statement.

Russia slammed the US and Israeli strikes on Iran and argued they were “bringing the region to the brink of a humanitarian, economic, and -- this cannot be ruled out -- radiological catastrophe”.

China urged “an immediate halt to military actions”, with Beijing’s foreign ministry insisting that “Iran’s national sovereignty, security and territorial integrity should be respected”.

Qatar, which hosts a US military base, condemned an Iranian missile attack on its territory and warned it “reserves its full right to respond to this attack”.

European Union chief Ursula von der Leyen stressed it was “critical” to “ensure nuclear safety” after the US indicated Iran’s atomic sites were in its crosshairs.

Norway’s foreign minister argued that Israel’s strikes on Iran broke international law, noting that “a pre-emptive attack would require the existence of an imminent threat”.

India’s foreign ministry insisted that “dialogue and diplomacy should be pursued” while the “sovereignty and territorial integrity of all states must be respected”.

> **I call for restraint and implore all parties to see reason**
>
> **VOLKER TURK**
> UN human rights chief

Britain, France and Germany jointly condemned Iran’s retaliatory strikes, with the UK government also expressing fears the situation could escalate “into a wider regional conflict”. The countries said that none of them had taken part in the US-Israeli operation.

Urging a halt to the “dangerous” escalation, French President Emmanuel Macron also called for an urgent meeting of the UN Security Council.

Lebanese Prime Minister Nawaf Salam vowed his country would not be dragged into war after Israel announced it was carrying out strikes targeting Iran proxy Hezbollah in south Lebanon amid the Iran operation.

Reza Pahlavi, the son of Iran’s last shah, claimed “final victory” was near following the strikes. “Together we can take back and rebuild Iran,” said Pahlavi -- who lives in exile in the United States.

Egypt’s foreign ministry said it “strongly condemns Iran’s targeting of the unity and territorial integrity of brotherly Arab states”, warning of “the grave risks this poses to the security and stability of Arab states”.

Turkey’s foreign ministry urged “all parties to cease hostilities immediately” as the conflict “risks the future of our region and global stability”.

Jordan’s government urged de-escalation while warning it will defend the kingdom’s interests “with all its might”. A government spokesman said the country was not part of the conflict.

Palestinian militant group and Iran ally Hamas condemned the United States and Israel’s “aggression” towards Tehran, calling it “a direct assault on the entire region”.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky argued the strikes on Iran created an opportunity for the Iranian people to oust the “terrorist regime” in Tehran.

International Committee of the Red Cross President Mirjana Spoljaric warned that the “military escalation in the Middle East is igniting a dangerous chain reaction across the region, with potentially devastating consequences for civilians”.

The African Union called “for restraint, urgent de-escalation and sustained dialogue” after the strikes, warning that conflict could risk harming people on the continent.

Travel chaos grips ME after US strikes Iran

REUTERS, *Dubai/London*

Airlines suspended flights across the Middle East yesterday, including to and from the world’s busiest travel hub, Dubai, after the United States and Israel launched strikes on Iran, plunging the region into a renewed military confrontation.

Flight maps showed airspace over Iran, Iraq, Kuwait, Israel and Bahrain virtually empty as Israel said it struck Iran and the U.S. military initiated a series of strikes against targets in the country. Iran retaliated with a salvo of missiles.

Witnesses told Reuters about explosions across the Gulf, including in Qatar’s Doha, which hosts the biggest U.S. military base in the Middle East, as well as Abu Dhabi and Dubai in the United Arab Emirates -- key regional transport hubs.

Dubai Airports said all flights at Dubai International, which handled nearly 100 million passengers last year, as well as the smaller Al Maktoum International airport, were suspended until further notice, urging passengers not to travel.

- Airspace closures affect routes between Europe and Asia
- Lufthansa, Wizz Air, others halt flights to affected regions
- EU aviation regulator advises against flying over Middle East amid military operations

“Due to multiple regional airspace closures, Emirates has temporarily suspended operations to and from Dubai,” the Dubai-based carrier said, while its sister airline flydubai said it had temporarily suspended operations.

Etihad Airways said all flights scheduled to depart Abu Dhabi were suspended until 1000 GMT on Sunday, and flights expected to arrive at the Gulf hub before that time would be cancelled. “Flights already en route to Abu Dhabi are returning to their origin airports where required,” it added.

STRIKES DEEPEN REGIONAL TURMOIL

The escalation dimmed hopes for a diplomatic solution to Tehran’s nuclear dispute with the West and reignited conflict after weeks of U.S. military buildup in the region.

It marks the latest upheaval for air travel in the usually busy region amid escalating tensions. Airports in the Middle East are some of the busiest in the world, covering an area stretching from Iran and Iraq to the Mediterranean and serving as a connecting hub for flights between Europe and Asia.

“Passengers and airlines can expect airspace to be shut for quite some time in the region,” said Eric Schouten, head of aviation security advisory Dyami. “The impact on regional aviation is immediate and highly fluid.”

FLIGHTS REROUTED, PASSENGERS STRANDED

Airlines have cancelled almost 40% of flights to Israel and 6.7% of flights to the broader region yesterday, according to preliminary Cirium data. That number seems likely to rise.

At Doha’s Hamad International Airport, gates appeared almost empty, while stranded passengers queued to make hotel arrangements. There was uncertainty about when flight schedules would resume, a Reuters witness reported.

Democrats slam Trump’s ‘illegal’ war

AFP, *Washington*

Republicans largely welcomed strikes launched Saturday by US forces and ally Israel against Iran but prominent Democrats condemned what they called an illegal aggression.

“Today, Iran is facing the severe consequences of its evil actions,” including “terrorism,” the murder of Americans and the regime’s sustained nuclear ambitions, Speaker of the House of Representatives Mike Johnson said in a statement.

However, the top Democrat in the Senate, Minority Leader Chuck Schumer, demanded a briefing to Congress by the Trump administration.

“The American people do not want another endless and costly war in the Middle East when there are so many problems at home,” he said.

Republican Congressman Thomas Massie broke ranks to say: “I am opposed to this war.”

“This is not ‘America First,’” Massie posted, referring to Trump’s widely used campaign slogan. The Republican stressed that when the House and Senate reconvene, he will work with Democrats to “force a congressional vote on war with Iran.”

The site where a Bolivian Air Force Hercules aircraft carrying banknotes crashed on Friday evening onto a busy avenue amid inclement weather in the city of El Alto, Bolivia. At least 20 people were killed in the crash. PHOTO: **REUTERS**

The Daily Star
FOUNDER EDITOR: **LATE S. M. ALI**

Khulna's tremor should shake us into action

New govt must prioritise this

Yesterday's 5.4-magnitude earthquake in Satkhira is yet another warning that Bangladesh cannot afford complacency. The tremor, felt across several districts, including Dhaka and even Kolkata, triggered panic as people rushed out of homes, offices and schools. Buildings shook, and some were damaged. Just a day earlier, a 3.2-magnitude quake struck Kaliganj in Jhenaidah, neighbouring Satkhira. In the past 27 days alone, nine earthquakes have hit the country.

The immediacy of these events makes it clear that our first priority must be to strengthen emergency response capacity. Investing in an effective early warning system could provide crucial seconds for evacuation and allow essential systems to shut down. We need specialised, well-equipped urban search and rescue teams, which means training thousands of civilian first responders.

Coordination must also improve between civil authorities, the armed forces and medical services. The government should run sustained awareness campaigns through radio, television and digital platforms, alongside regular community and institutional drills.

Beyond immediate response, a fundamental step is conducting a modern, nationwide seismic survey. Bangladesh's last major seismic mapping was done in 1979. While major fault lines have been identified, many internal faults remain unmapped. A precise, updated seismological map is essential for realistic risk assessment and planning.

At least half of Dhaka's buildings could collapse in a major quake. Experts have long stressed the need to strictly enforce the national building code, penalising violations in design and construction quality. Here, Rajdhani Unnayan Kartripakkha (RAJUK), the primary regulatory authority, must fulfil its mandate. A glance at Dhaka's skyline shows how unplanned urbanisation has flourished under its watch.

The greatest danger lies in old and poorly constructed buildings, particularly in dense areas. In November last year, RAJUK identified around 300 small and large buildings in Dhaka as vulnerable following earthquakes. We would like to know what has been done about this so far.

The government's plan should include comprehensive structural safety audits, identification of high-risk schools, hospitals and residential blocks, and phased retrofitting programmes. Retrofitting is costly; incentives or subsidies may be necessary to help private owners strengthen their properties. Yet the cost of inaction would be far greater.

All new construction—public and private—must incorporate earthquake-resistant techniques. Engineers, architects and contractors require training in updated standards. Countries such as Japan, the United States, and Turkey have demonstrated that strictly enforced modern building codes save lives.

Preparedness demands investment and strategic planning. But we cannot be lackadaisical about a threat that could claim thousands of lives. The recent tremors in Khulna and other places are warnings. We cannot prevent earthquakes, but we can prevent them from becoming national catastrophes.

Expedite CMCH burn unit project

Govt must establish more burn units in the country given heightened risks

In a country where over 12 lakh people sustain burn injuries annually, a single, fully equipped burn institute in the capital is clearly not enough. People with burn injuries from outside Dhaka are especially disadvantaged in this regard, as they must travel for hours on unpredictable roads, battling traffic to reach the 500-bed National Institute of Burn and Plastic Surgery (NIBPS). The journey often costs lives, as seen in the case of a family from the Halishahar area in Chattogram.

Nine members of the family suffered 25 to 100 percent burn injuries in the early hours of February 23, when a gas leak inside their flat in the port city caused an explosion. The victims were rushed to Chattogram Medical College Hospital (CMCH) but then had to be transferred to Dhaka, 250 kilometres away, because the burn unit there lacked a specialised intensive care unit (ICU) and high-dependency unit (HDU) for severely burned patients. Even that transfer was not easy, as moving critically burned patients requires ICU ambulances, which are limited in both availability and affordability.

While ICU ambulances at public hospitals often suffer from manpower shortages, hiring a private ICU ambulance for a trip from Chattogram to Dhaka costs between Tk 25,000 and Tk 30,000. In some areas, a patient's fate is further complicated by the presence of ambulance syndicates. Although friends and relatives of the Halishahar family managed to hire an ICU ambulance within a few hours, two of the severely burned patients died before reaching the gates of NIBPS.

This tragedy raises the question of why, nearly a decade after its establishment in 2016, NIBPS remains the only fully equipped burn treatment facility in the country. Work is reportedly underway to build a 150-bed burn unit with modern equipment in Chattogram, funded by the Chinese government. However, as with many infrastructure projects in Bangladesh, completion is certain to be delayed. The agreement for the Tk 285 crore project was signed in 2023, with completion initially set for June 2026. The fall of the Awami League government in August 2024 delayed the process, and physical construction did not begin before June 2025.

The new government must expedite this crucial project, which will serve four crore people in the Chattogram region. At the same time, initiatives to establish additional burn institutes or fully equipped burn units in public hospitals nationwide should proceed. The shortage of specialised healthcare professionals in this field must also be addressed. Finally, measures are needed to make ICU ambulances more accessible and reliable. Such action is urgent, particularly as the risk of fire incidents rises alongside increased seismic activity in the country.

THIS DAY IN HISTORY

Salem Witch Hunt begins

On this day in 1692, the Salem witch hunt began as three women were charged with witchcraft in Massachusetts, sparking mass accusations and trials.

CENTRAL BANK SHAKE-UP

Why is BNP undermining its reformist legacy?

Kamal Ahmed
is consulting editor at The Daily Star. He led the Media Reform Commission under the immediate past interim government. His X handle is @ahmedka1.

KAMAL AHMED

The removal of Bangladesh Bank Governor Ahsan H Mansur, widely credited with steadying an economy that was on the brink of potential collapse, has been described by many as nothing short of a blunder by the new government. Of course, any government has the legal authority to appoint or remove a governor in pursuit of its economic agenda. Yet two aspects of this episode have shocked observers. First, the manner of Mansur's departure, marked by public humiliation rather than a well-earned vote of thanks. Second, the appointment of a businessman burdened by apparent conflicts of interest and lacking expertise in banking and macroeconomic management.

This mishandling of central bank leadership by the Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) government warrants close scrutiny. However, responsibility does not rest with the current administration alone. The immediate past interim government also bears some blame. A draft law granting operational autonomy to Bangladesh Bank remained with the finance ministry for over four months. The proposed reform would have removed three government officials from the central bank's governing board. Unfortunately, then Finance Adviser Salehuddin Ahmed—himself a former governor—reportedly yielded to bureaucratic pressure and shelved the reform agenda.

It is worth recalling that the interim administration led by Professor Muhammad Yunus, which emerged from the 2024 mass uprising against a toxic blend of autocracy and kleptocracy long accused of plundering banks and laundering funds abroad, had pledged sweeping reforms in the banking sector. But Bangladesh Bank was conspicuously absent from its long list of more than 180 ordinances. Had the interim government enacted a measure to restructure the central bank and secure its independence as an effective regulator, the present controversy might have been avoided.

A glance back at 2003 offers a striking contrast. During BNP's earlier tenure in power, late Finance Minister Saifur Rahman moved to strengthen the central bank's authority. On March 1, 2003, he introduced amendments to the Bangladesh Bank Order of 1972, enhancing the institution's powers to curb loan defaults. Three additional bills, including reforms to the Artha Rin Adalat Ain (Money Loan Court Act), were passed through Jatiya Sangsad that same week.

Ahsan H Mansur is seen leaving Bangladesh Bank premises on February 25, 2026.
SCREEN GRAB: **NTV**

On March 10, a group of employees under the banner of Jatiyatabadi Officers' Association tried to create chaos at the central bank and disrupt then Governor Fakhruddin Ahmed's routine, with further plans for the next day ("Pro-BNP officers likely to besiege governor today," *The Daily Star*, March 11, 2003). On that day, presidential assent to those four bills related to banking sector regulation was received. The following day, *The Daily Star* carried another report with a stark warning from Saifur Rahman that no one would be allowed to create any trouble at the central bank or derail reforms.

At that stage, those officers retreated. However, within a few months they again organised a protest against certain administrative measures. On October 28, they besieged Fakhruddin Ahmed in his office for about an hour. Saifur Rahman extended strong support to the governor and, on October 30, 10 officers, including the president and general secretary of the Collective Bargaining Agent (CBA) union, were dismissed. Rahman's firm stance restored order and underscored BNP's commitment, at the time, to insulating the central bank from partisan interference.

In contrast to its earlier record of resisting politicisation within the central bank, BNP's current approach appears to be yielding to pressure groups, both internal and partisan. Political affiliations and muscle-flexing within the banking sector plagued Bangladesh during the 1980s and 1990s. Although incidents of besieging and verbally abusing governors occurred under both BNP and Awami League governments, BNP once distinguished itself by confronting such disruptions decisively. The early signs this time, however, are troubling.

Historically, under the leadership of Khaleda Zia, BNP enacted important reforms, including the Bangladesh Bank (Amendment) Act, 2003, aimed at curbing loan defaults. The appointment of Md Mostaqur Rahman as the new governor seems inconsistent with that legacy. Some observers, including the Transparency International Bangladesh (TIB), have noted that the appointee was previously a loan defaulter and later benefited from rescheduling "under special consideration." Moreover, clause 10, sub-clause 9(d) of the amender order clearly states that no individual who has defaulted on payments to the government, a banking company, or a financial institution is eligible to serve as governor or deputy governor. This raises a critical question: was the appointment an oversight then, or was it a disregard for the very reforms once championed by BNP?

According to his official profile, the new governor previously served as chairman of the Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association's (BGMEA) Standing Committee on Bangladesh Bank and held memberships in several trade bodies, including the BGMEA, the Real Estate and Housing Association of Bangladesh (REHAB), the Association of Travel Agents of Bangladesh (ATAB), and the Dhaka Chamber of Commerce and Industry (DCCI). These organisations primarily advocate for the interests of their respective members. It is therefore reasonable to ask whether a former trade representative can impartially regulate sectors with which he has been so closely associated, especially if former colleagues seek special considerations similar to those he once received.

The finance minister's response of "no comment" to questions surrounding the appointment has only deepened public concern. Why not affirm unequivocally that the most qualified candidate was selected? Why not assure the public that due diligence was rigorously applied? Above all, can it be said with confidence that this decision does not undermine BNP's earlier reformist legacy?

These are not partisan questions. They go to the heart of the institutional integrity and independence of Bangladesh Bank—principles that are indispensable to economic stability and public trust.

What's in a word? The battle for cultural authority

Ahmed Ashfaque Shahbaz
is a PhD candidate in political economy at the University of Exeter in the United Kingdom. He can be reached at aashahbaz9@gmail.com.

AHMED ASHFAQUE SHAHBAZ

The crisis in Bangladesh today is not only political. It is civilisational, linguistic, and epistemic. What we are witnessing after the collapse of a dominant political order is an open contest over cultural authority: who has the right to define the nation's language, moral vocabulary, historical memory, and acceptable public speech.

For years, political domination was accompanied by an attempt to stabilise a particular cultural hegemony. This was not merely about elections, institutions, or the security apparatus. It was also about shaping the symbolic universe through which people interpreted themselves. In that order, certain ways of speaking were treated as refined, modern, progressive, and "authentic," while other vocabularies were dismissed as backward, communal, vulgar, or alien. The point was not simply linguistic preference. The point was control over legitimacy.

This is why the present struggle cannot be reduced to a debate over a few words. The return of terms such as *insaf*, *zulum*, *mazlum*, *faisala*, *inquilab*, and *zindabad* in public speech is significant not because these are "new" words, but precisely because they are not. These words belong to older layers of Bangla's history, shaped through long interaction with Persian and Arabic vocabularies before colonial language engineering and elite canon formation narrowed what counted as respectable Bangla in many institutional settings. Their renewed circulation today signals not linguistic decline, but political reopening. It reflects a wider struggle over who gets to speak for the nation and in what moral language.

A Foucauldian reading is especially useful here. Foucault teaches us that power does not operate only through visible coercion from the top. It also works through discourse, institutions, classification, and the production of "truth." In this sense, the old power centres are not merely defending grammar; they are attempting to police the truth. They are trying to prevent ideational competition by preserving their authority to decide what is proper Bangla, what is civilised expression, and what forms of speech can enter the public sphere without stigma.

This is what makes the current contest so intense. It is not simply a contest between two political camps; it is a contest between competing regimes of truth. One regime seeks to maintain a monopoly over cultural legitimacy by presenting its historical preferences as neutral standards. The other seeks to reopen the field by restoring suppressed vocabularies and alternative moral idioms to public life. The language question, therefore, is also a question of power and knowledge: who names, who classifies, who excludes, and who is forced to defend their own tongue as if it were an intruder.

The July uprising made this contradiction impossible to hide. It was not a movement with a single centre, ideology, or social base. It was a multi-centred political eruption. Public university students mobilised over jobs, quota reform, and justice. Private university students stood in solidarity and amplified the call for accountability. BNP entered the moment with its own political equation. Jamaat and other Islamist actors dealt with it through different calculations. Left-leaning activists read the crisis through exploitation, repression, and the language of people's rights. Liberals and conservatives alike opposed authoritarian domination for different reasons. The significance of this multiplicity is profound: a broad social coalition emerged not because it shared one worldview, but because it encountered a common structure of domination.

In Foucauldian terms, this was a biopolitical order under stress. The Hasina regime did not merely seek obedience; it sought to regulate life, aspiration, visibility, and the terms through which citizens could imagine justice. Students demanding jobs and reform, citizens demanding accountability, and groups demanding moral recognition were all confronting a system that had extended power across social life. Once that order fractured, the battle moved immediately to discourse. When the state-centred order weakens, the struggle over cultural authority intensifies.

That is why the current anxiety among old cultural elites is so revealing. If they now insist that the re-entry of Persianate/Arabic-inflected words will lead to "distortion" or "impurity" of Bangla, they are not making a neutral philological intervention. They are drawing a boundary around legitimacy. They are attempting to preserve a hierarchy of speech and, with it, a hierarchy of speakers. This is precisely where the language of "purity" becomes politically suspect. No living language is pure. They are layered, borrowed, adaptive, and contested. To demand purity is often to demand obedience to a cultural canon maintained by institutions of prestige.

The public debate around Professor Tariq Manzoor's statement that Bangla is being "deliberately distorted" has become emblematic of this wider struggle. Whether one agrees with him or not, the political significance of such interventions lies in their timing and function: they emerge at a moment when previously marginalised vocabularies are re-entering mainstream political speech. The issue is therefore not only language quality; it is cultural gatekeeping in a transitional period.

Bangladesh is now in a period where the long-standing political authority has been destabilised, but cultural authority has not yet been democratised. That is why the language question feels so charged. It condenses a larger conflict over memory, class, ideology, religion, and national identity. The central issue is not whether Bangla will remain "pure"—no language is. The central issue is whether Bangladesh can move towards a more plural public culture in which no single elite bloc can monopolise the right to define the nation's speech, history, and truth.

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Imperial maps, Pak-Afghan war, and a way forward

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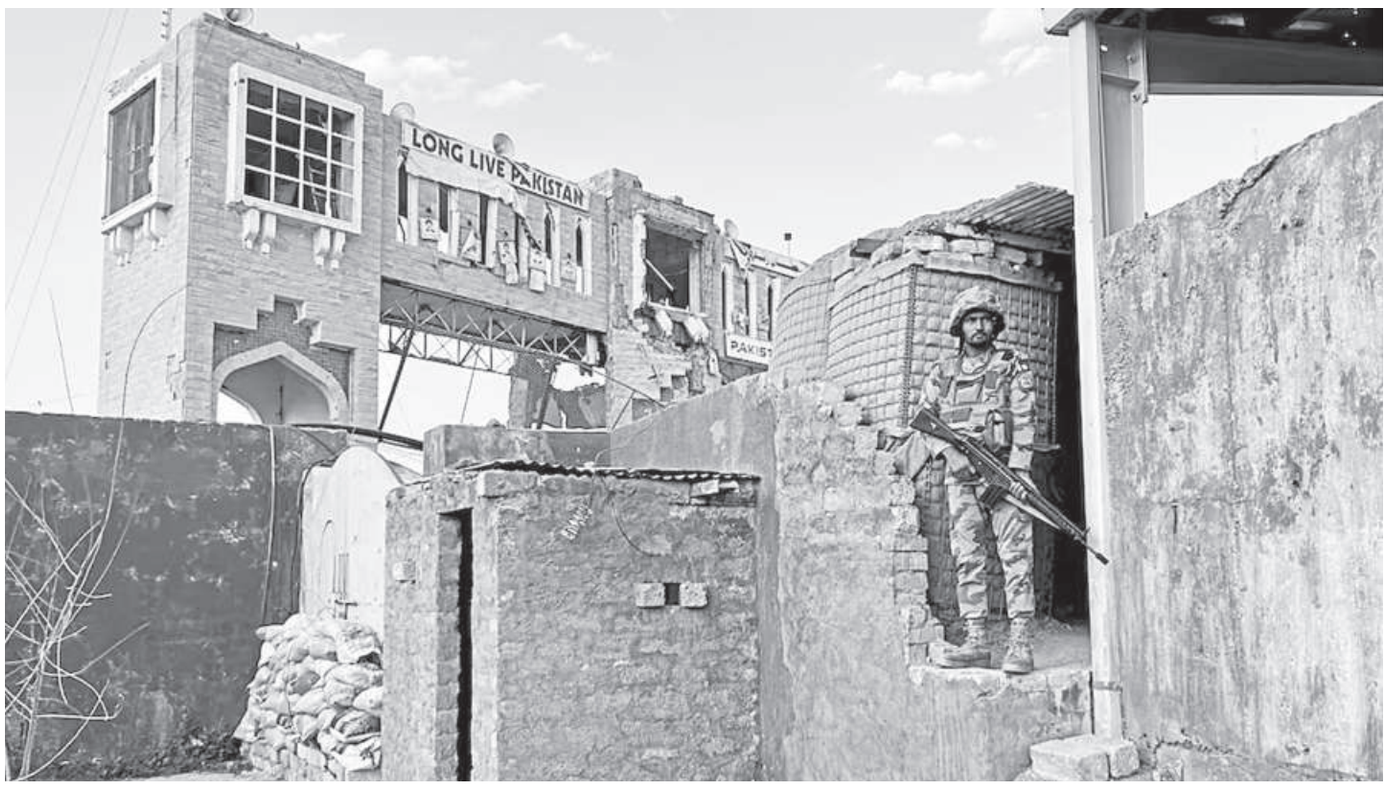
ASIF BIN ALI

The latest round of fighting between Afghanistan and Pakistan did not begin with one airstrike or one angry speech on social media. When Pakistan's defence minister publicly spoke of an "open war" with Kabul after Pakistani jets bombed targets in Kabul and Kandahar, it sounded like a sudden eruption. In reality, it is another flare-up in a conflict whose roots go back to British imperial map-making in the 19th century, the politics of Pashtun identity, and decades of proxy wars that both states have used and then lost control over.

Afghanistan was one of the first states in the region to be shaped as a modern territorial buffer. Its present borders were not drawn mainly by Afghans but by British and Russian officials during the Great Game. They wanted a cushion between Tsarist Russia and British India, not a stable homeland for the peoples who actually lived there. Through a series of treaties, they carved out a landlocked Afghanistan, cut many Pashtun communities in half, and left the new state dependent on its neighbours for trade and access to the sea. The Durand Line of 1893, agreed between Sir Mortimer Durand and Amir Abdur Rahman, sliced right through Pashtun tribal lands. For the British, it was a frontier. For many Afghans, it was a temporary administrative line that was never meant to become a permanent international border.

Things became even more complicated in 1947. When Pakistan was created, Afghanistan was the only country to vote against its admission to the United Nations. Kabul refused to formally recognise the Durand Line and began to talk about "Pashtunistan" – an imagined homeland for Pashtuns on both sides of the frontier. For Pakistan, trying to consolidate its western border while already locked in rivalry with India, this looked like an existential threat. Relations between Kabul and Islamabad were born with a built-in trust deficit.

Cold War politics added another poisonous layer. During the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, Pakistan became the main staging ground for mujahideen groups backed by the United States and Saudi Arabia. For the Pakistani security establishment, supporting Afghan fighters and later the Taliban was part of a bigger strategy: to gain "strategic depth" against India by having a friendly or dependent regime in Kabul. That logic survived into the 1990s when the first Taliban government came to power with heavy Pakistani support. It was a short-term success that turned into long-term blowback.



An army soldier stands guard at the Friendship Gate in Chaman, Pakistan, after cross-border fire between Pakistani and Afghan forces on February 27, 2026.
PHOTO: REUTERS

The same militant networks that Pakistan had helped nurture across the Durand Line did not stay in neat boxes. Out of the jihad infrastructure and the radicalisation in the tribal belt came the Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP). By the late 2000s the TTP was waging war on the Pakistani state itself, bombing schools, mosques, army bases, markets and police stations. Today, different estimates suggest that TTP and allied groups can field tens of thousands of fighters spread across the border areas. From Islamabad's perspective, the biggest security threat now comes not from India alone but from these groups sheltering in or moving through Afghan territory.

The return of the Afghan Taliban to power in Kabul in 2021 changed the balance again. Pakistan's generals initially hoped that a friendly Taliban government would help control the TTP. Instead, many Pakistani Taliban leaders relocated across the border and gained new space. A brief ceasefire between the TTP and Pakistan collapsed, and attacks inside Pakistan rose. Afghan Taliban officials publicly promised not to let anyone use their soil against other countries, but on the ground, TTP cadres kept posting videos from Afghan districts and claiming responsibility for attacks in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Balochistan. Pakistan felt betrayed by a movement it had once supported.

From 2022 onwards, Pakistani forces carried out airstrikes inside Afghan territory several times, targeting what they said were TTP bases. Afghan authorities accused them of killing civilians and violating sovereignty. There were cross-border raids, artillery duels and temporary closures of key crossings like Torkham and Spin Boldak. By late 2025 and early 2026, the clashes had become more intense.

On paper there is no doubt that Pakistan holds much greater conventional military power. It has a large standing army, tanks, fighter jets, drones and nuclear weapons. Afghanistan under the Taliban has a much smaller force, mostly light infantry and limited air capability, with no navy and no nuclear deterrent. Pakistan can also hurt Afghanistan in quieter but equally painful ways: closing borders, restricting trade, cutting off banking channels, or deporting Afghan refugees. As a landlocked country that depends heavily on its neighbours for transit and on aid for its fragile economy, Afghanistan is extremely vulnerable to such pressure.

But power is not just about numbers and hardware. The Taliban also have levers that can deeply hurt Pakistan. Allowing TTP and other groups to use Afghan soil as safe havens means that they can continue to bleed the Pakistani state with relatively low cost. Even if Kabul does not formally endorse their operations, a blind eye is often enough. Guerrilla attacks on remote Pakistani outposts have a disproportionate psychological impact. For an army that prides itself on controlling the country, the image of Afghanistan-linked militants raising their flag on Pakistani soil is a humiliation.

Every Pakistani bomb that lands on Afghan soil may weaken Kabul militarily but it also deepens the story that Islamabad is an enemy of Pashtuns, not just of one regime.

The fighting therefore moves in circles. Pakistan hits suspected TTP or Taliban positions; Afghan leaders publicly condemn the strikes and quietly tolerate or encourage retaliatory attacks across the border; Pakistani security forces respond with more operations; and ordinary people are displaced or killed on both sides. Each round leaves more bitterness, shrinks the space for dialogue, and strengthens hardliners who argue that "the other side only understands force."

This conflict is not sealed off from the rest of the region. India quietly watches Pakistan's western border heat up while its own Line of Control with Pakistan stays relatively quieter. For New Delhi, a Pakistan stuck in a two-front security dilemma is not necessarily bad news. China, on the other hand, worries that instability in Pakistan and Afghanistan will threaten its Belt and Road investments, especially the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor and potential mining deals in Afghanistan. It wants Pakistan strong enough to protect Chinese workers and Afghan Taliban leaders serious enough to curb any group that might fuel militancy in neighbouring Xinjiang. Russia and the United States, despite being rivals, also do not want another full-scale regional war that can create fresh space for transnational jihadist networks.

A full traditional war, with large armies crossing the Durand Line, is still unlikely. Pakistan knows that invading Afghanistan would be a nightmare: the terrain is unforgiving, the Taliban are experienced guerrilla fighters, and any occupation would trigger wider regional reactions. The Taliban also know they cannot defeat Pakistan's army or survive sustained bombing of their main cities and ministries without massive damage. What is much more probable is a continuing pattern of "low intensity, high impact" conflict.

At the heart of all this lies a set of unresolved questions. Will Afghanistan ever formally recognise the Durand Line, or will it continue to treat it as an imposed colonial border? Can Pakistan accept that its project of using Islamist groups as foreign policy tools has produced enemies it can no longer control? Will both sides find a way to speak honestly about Pashtun grievances on both sides of the line without turning them into weapons? Without movement on these basic issues, every new government in Kabul or Islamabad will inherit the same script.

Madhabdi rape: Will justice prevail or be forgotten again?

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H.M. NAZMUL ALAM

Recently, in Narsingdi's Madhabdi upazila, a father watched his teenage daughter being dragged away into the night. The next morning, she was found dead in a crop field. Between those two moments stretched the familiar distance between crime and consequence in Bangladesh—a distance measured not in miles but in indifference. The question here is not whether the authorities will go through the motions of justice. They most likely will. The real question is whether justice will ultimately prevail.

Bangladesh has been here before. Too many times. In 2020, the gang rape of a woman in Noakhali sparked nationwide protests after a video of the assault went viral, which eventually forced the then government to introduce the death penalty for rape under the Women and Children Repression Prevention Act. It was hailed as a turning point by some who believed that harsher punishment would deter criminals. The law changed. The frequency of rape incidents, however, did not.

The Madhabdi case carries additional layers that make it more uncomfortable. There have been allegations of prior sexual violence, and of local arbitration. There have been claims of threats to leave the area as well as whispers of political shielding. All of this sounds painfully familiar. When rape becomes a "matter" to be settled locally, often through informal arbitration led by influential figures, the crime is transformed from a violation of a human being into a negotiable dispute. Money changes hands, silence is purchased, and the message that predators get is that power can be leveraged to manage consequences.

We often hear that families do not report rape because of social stigma. That is true. But it is also incomplete. Many families do not report because they know what awaits them if they do: endless court dates, social ostracisation, character assassination of the victim, financial exhaustion, threats from the accused. In rural and semi-urban areas, where political patronage networks frequently intersect with law enforcement and local governance, seeking justice can mean inviting retaliation, as it did in the case of the Madhabdi teenager. That detail should haunt us.

We must confront an uncomfortable truth attached to this pattern of violence: rape in Bangladesh is not only a crime of individual pathology; it is often a crime of impunity. The perpetrator calculates risk. If he believes that his political connections, local influence, or financial leverage can neutralise the law, the deterrent effect of even the death penalty becomes abstract. A harsh sentence written in the statute book means little if the path to that sentence is obstructed by delay, compromise, or intimidation.

It is common knowledge that the judiciary is heavily burdened. Hundreds of thousands of cases remain pending in courts across the country, including thousands under the Women and Children Repression Prevention Act. Special tribunals were established to expedite these cases, but delays remain chronic nonetheless. Trials stretch for years. For victims, each adjournment is another wound. Public outrage, meanwhile, is seasonal. We trend for a week, we light candles, we march, we post hashtags. But then another headline replaces the last, and we forget. This collective amnesia is perhaps the most dangerous thing.

When the death penalty for rape was introduced in 2020, many warned that punishment alone would not solve structural problems. They were right. Data since then has shown that rape incidents have not declined in any meaningful measure. Harsh punishment without the certainty of conviction is a hollow threat. Criminological research across jurisdictions consistently shows that the certainty of punishment deters crime more effectively than the severity of it. If the probability of conviction is perceived as low, the fear of death becomes distant.

There is also the matter of local power structures. In many areas, informal arbitration remains a parallel justice system. It can resolve land disputes or family conflicts, but when it ventures into criminal territory, it can be an instrument of coercion as well. The Madhabdi case suggests that local figures attempted to mediate or suppress an earlier assault. If true, this is not an isolated aberration. In the past, the media has often reported instances where rape survivors were pressured into "compromise," sometimes even forced into marriage with their rapists. What does it say about a society when a teenager is assaulted, threatened, abducted in front of her father, and murdered, all within a context of prior warnings?

Reportedly, the police have since arrested several suspects, including the prime accused. But arrest is not justice. Justice requires a transparent investigation, protection for witnesses, forensic integrity, and a trial conducted without any external interference. Justice also requires accountability for anyone who attempts to shield the accused or obstruct due process. If local leaders in Madhabdi indeed facilitated intimidation or financial settlement, their liability must be examined with the same seriousness as the primary perpetrators. Otherwise, we are merely pruning branches while watering the roots.

There is also a deeper cultural dimension. Patriarchal attitudes continue to shape social responses to rape in our country. Victims are frequently scrutinised. Their mobility is questioned, their clothing discussed, and their character dissected. Even when outrage erupts, it often centres on the brutality of the act rather than the everyday entitlement that precedes it. Boys grow up watching how power operates. They observe how influential men remain untouchable by the law. They internalise lessons about dominance and consequence.

Will the Madhabdi case prove to be a difference? The answer is that it depends less on public emotion and more on institutional resolve. If the investigation remains insulated from political pressure, if forensic evidence is properly collected and preserved, if the prosecution is diligent, and if the trial is concluded within a reasonable timeframe, then perhaps this case could become a good precedent. Otherwise, the case risks joining the ever-expanding archive of grief and fading into oblivion. So, what shall it be?

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Memo No.: NIDCH/e-GP/2025-26/526 Date: 28/02/2026

e-Tender Notice

An e-Tender has been invited in the national e-GP system portal (http://www.eprocure.gov.bd) for the procurement of following for the FY- 2025-2026

Tender Details

Sl. No.	Tender ID No	Description of work & package No.	Tender Last Selling (Date & Time)	Tender Closing (Date & Time)	Tender Opening (Date & Time)	Estimated Cost (TK) / Remarks
1	1236235	Procurement of ABG Machine reagent for FY 2025-26	16-03-2026 10.00	16-03-2026 14.00	16-03-2026 14.00	OTM
2	1179114	Procurement of Non EDCL Medicine Part-4 for FY 2025-26	16-03-2026 11.00	16-03-2026 14.00	16-03-2026 14.00	OTM

This is online Tender, where only e-tender will be accepted in the national e-GP portal and no off line / 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's branches up to banking hour specified in the online tender notice. Further informations and guidelines are available in the National e-GP system portal and from e-GP help desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd) (01762625528-31).

(Dr. Golam Sarwar Liaquat Hossain Bhuiyan)
Director

GD-434

Inside Dana Wyse's pharmacy of desire

An exclusive interview from Bangladesh

PHOTOS: COURTESY

At a table in Bangladesh this January, Canadian conceptual artist Dana Wyse slid a small plastic packet across the surface as if offering medicine. Inside sat a brightly coloured capsule and a printed promise of instant transformation. Fame without labour. Love without vulnerability. Certainty without doubt.

DOWEL BISWAS

No one believes the pills work. That is precisely why they do.

For more than three decades, Wyse has manufactured fictional remedies under her ongoing project ***Jesus Had a Sister Productions***, packaging desire itself as a consumer product. The works resemble pharmacy merchandise or airport impulse buys — objects designed to reassure before they are even understood.

Dana's arrival in Bangladesh carried the strange familiarity of a travelling salesperson, except that nothing she sells intends to cure anything at all.

The fantasy she exposes predates modern markets. Capitalism merely refined its aesthetics.

Today sleep arrives through tracking apps and supplements engineered for optimisation. Beauty through routines disguised as self-care. Happiness through productivity systems, promising calm as a reward for discipline. Even rest feels measurable.

Choose correctly, consume wisely, optimise relentlessly — and uncertainty might retreat.

Yet exhaustion persists. Confidence feels rented. Pleasure arrives curated and leaves behind fatigue mistaken for achievement. Lack is not erased; it is redesigned and returned as another purchase. Wyse's pills simply say the quiet part aloud.

The world-renowned artist visited Bangladesh in January, where this correspondent had the opportunity to interview her.

Her ongoing project, ***Jesus Had a Sister Productions***, consists of hundreds of small plastic packets resembling pharmaceutical products. Inside sit brightly coloured "pills" accompanied by outrageous guarantees: "Become a Millionaire the Old Fashioned Way". "Stay in Love Forever". "Completely Control Your Family".

They hang in museum shops across the world. They promise transformation,

but offer none. And that very absence is the 'work'.

Wyse borrows capitalism's visual grammar — branding, typography, packaging — not to sell solutions but to expose how readily people want to believe in them. The objects hover between joke, irony and confession. Laughter arrives first, then hesitation.

Why does this feel plausible? Her own origin story sounds suspiciously like one of the artworks.

The first pill she ever made, an "Instant Fame" capsule, appeared at a modest exhibition in a Paris apartment. Within days, a major newspaper reviewed the show. Months later, she appeared on a magazine cover.

"One small pill incredibly altered the course of my entire life," she recalls.

For more than thirty years, she has travelled from Los Angeles to Luang Prabang and Bangladesh carrying a suitcase filled with promises she never intended to fulfil.

Audiences inevitably ask the same question. Do they work?

"The truth is, I don't know," she says. "But when the mind focuses on a wish, it begins a mysterious chain of events."

Intention, she believes, alters behaviour. Imagination produces momentum. The artwork grants no miracle; it exposes the longing for effortlessness. Humour becomes an entry point, rather than a shield.

According to the artist, ideas often begin with irritation — a mosquito refusing to die, a bar of soap repeatedly disappearing beneath bathwater until she imagines embedding a magnet inside it simply to end the inconvenience.

Sometimes, inspiration arrives through archival images. Her Paris studio contains decades of vintage magazines. "An image always talks", Dana says.

A photograph of a man walking a horse becomes the absurd pill "Turn Your Wife Into A Horse Instantly." The harmless image mutates into a domestic fantasy about power and intimacy — the desire to change others without consent.

Even artificial intelligence provokes speculation. "What if my mother lied?" she jokes. "What if I'm a robot?" The humour disguises a philosophical question: how does anyone verify reality when belief constantly rewrites it?

Earlier this year, these questions travelled to Chittagong through ***Medicine***, a collaborative exhibition organised with students from the Institute of Fine Arts.

There was no hierarchy. "The students were teaching me," she says.

Participants translated her framework through local metaphors. Seeds gathered from the Chittagong Hill Tracts reflected growth and displacement. Honey suggested collective labour. Amulets negotiated belief between tradition and modern anxiety.

"What I love," she adds, "is briefly seeing life through someone else's eyes."

In Bangladesh, satire encountered a different urgency.

Rapid urban expansion and widening aspirations have produced their own ecosystem of promises — professional success, upward mobility, curated happiness. Self-improvement circulates beside familial expectation and social scrutiny.

Wyse's fictional remedies felt unexpectedly familiar. "When humour enters," she explains, "the spectator relaxes. That's how the message hits the target."

Capitalism remains both subject and medium. By mimicking retail packaging, she inadvertently created demand. Collectors began purchasing the works in large numbers. Her studio slowly transformed into a functioning business — the very system she intended to critique.

"We unconsciously learn typography. We unconsciously learn how to read images," she says. "We are literally born to shop."

The contradiction forced adaptation.

Now, when collectors order a 'pill' online, she often includes an additional artwork they never requested — sometimes unfinished, sometimes experimental.

"I try to remove value from art," she says. "If it's free, I'm allowed to make mistakes." Satire, she insists, resembles composing music — adding and subtracting until the tone feels right.

Dana rarely imagines an audience. "That would terrify me." The pills began as a way to laugh at herself. Recognition arrives as a connection rather than ambition.

"My work is about the joy of being alive," she says. "And the fear of being alive." She offers no cure.

Instead, she frames existence itself as improbable comedy, an irony of and around the absurdity of it— humans suspended on what she calls a drifting pebble in space, building monuments while losing socks.

Wouldn't it be comforting to believe in a 'pill' that guarantees order? Her art refuses that comfort.

It offers permission instead — to play, to imagine, to accept vulnerability without disguise.

"By suspending disbelief," she says, "we invent our lives."

The packets remain sealed behind plastic sleeves, promising miracles.

The real transformation happens elsewhere — in the quiet recognition that certainty was never the medicine we were looking for.

OUT AND ABOUT IN DHAKA

Amar Ekushey Boi Mela
Feb 26- March 15 | 11am- 9pm
Bangla Academy

'Witness to My Own Absence'
Feb 6-March 2 | 4-8pm
Kalakendra, Lalmatia

'One Square Stories'
Feb 14-March 14 | 10am onwards
Bhumi Gallery, Lalmatia

TRENDY STREAMS

Netflix
The Art of Sarah

Amazon Prime
56 days

Hulu
Scrubs

Disney+
Bloody Flower

Hoichoi
Adalat O Ekti Meye

'Be By You' by Luke Combs

Luke Combs leans into simplicity on ***Be By You***, a country ballad rooted in sincerity rather than spectacle. Built around warm acoustic textures and steady percussion, the song highlights Combs' unmistakable baritone as he sings about loyalty, companionship, and the quiet reassurance of showing up for someone without conditions.

Since its release, ***Be By You*** has found strong momentum across country streaming playlists, earning millions of Spotify streams and steady rotation on US country radio. The track continues Combs' streak of consistent chart performance, reinforcing his reputation as one of modern country music's most reliable hitmakers.

Unpretentious and direct, the song thrives on emotional clarity. It's less about grand declarations and more about everyday devotion; the kind of song that settles comfortably into long drives, open roads, and moments that don't need embellishment.

'Wuthering Heights'

Love, rage, and ruin on the moors.

The 2026 adaptation of ***Wuthering Heights*** revisits Emily Brontë's tempestuous classic with brooding elegance. Windswept landscapes mirror the volatile bond between Heathcliff and Catherine. Despite controversial casting, the film softens the novel's brutality, turning obsession into romance rather than raw madness. Immersive and emotionally charged, it reimagines the story's tragic beauty.

Body parts of man recovered from different Dhaka areas

Victim identified from fingerprints

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Police have identified the man whose severed body parts were found scattered across different areas of the capital.

The victim was Md Obaidullah, 29, a marketing officer at Gonoshasthya Homeo, a homeopathy clinic at Purana Paltan. He was originally from Narsingdi.

Police recovered two severed hands from between gates 1 and 4 of the National Stadium in Gulistan and a leg from in front of the Scout Bhaban in Kakrail early Friday.

The other severed leg was found in the Kamalapur Railway Station area yesterday noon.

Mohammad Harun-or-Rashid, deputy commissioner (Motijheel division) of Dhaka Metropolitan Police, said the victim was identified through fingerprint analysis.

Until 8:00pm yesterday, police were searching for the remaining body parts.

"We have spoken to his family about filing a case," Harun said. "We are analysing CCTV footage to identify the killers and the motive." He said, alongside DMP, the Detective Branch and other agencies are also investigating the case.

Robin, a colleague of the victim, said, "Our office was closed for the last three days. We have no idea what happened. We only learned about it when DB officials visited our office in the morning."

Home minister orders probe

FROM PAGE 12

cultural organisation, was also attacked and burned.

Outside the Prothom Alo office in the capital's Karwan Bazar, Salahuddin further told reporters, "With the attacks, a message went to the world that fanatic forces were in a strong position in Bangladesh and could attack any media outlet at will. Our image was tarnished, and we were ashamed.

"By ensuring exemplary punishment, we want to send an opposite message to the world -- that extremist and fanatic forces cannot hold back the progress of Bangladesh."

He added, "We [the BNP] strongly condemned the attacks when they occurred. But now, as I am in charge of the home ministry, the Prothom Alo family and the community of journalists, writers, intellectuals and litterateurs all have one demand -- a proper investigation."

The home minister said the Detective Branch of police is currently probing the incidents and has been instructed to conduct the investigation fairly before submitting the charge sheets within two months.

"Our duty is to ensure a fair investigation, while the judiciary will carry out the trials in the cases linked to the attacks."

Salahuddin, who is also a standing committee member of the ruling BNP, sought public cooperation to ensure justice and prevent the recurrence of such heinous acts.

About the exhibition, he said it felt like a "living museum".

"They [Prothom Alo] have tried to show how one can rise from the ruins. What we have seen and learned is that communal extremist forces may try to pull back the rope of progress, but history shows they have never succeeded."

Referring to the BNP's election manifesto, he said, "In our manifesto, we said we want an independent media and will ensure full freedom of the media. We also believe in the full independence of the judiciary and will establish that as well."

Foreign Minister Khalilur Rahman termed the attacks on Prothom Alo and The Daily Star antithetical to a civilised society.

"I had to face questions from the diplomatic community at home and abroad due to this attack. Our heads have bowed down in shame internationally."

He said no government can shirk responsibility for such attacks and that this government will ensure a proper trial and exemplary punishment.

"The attacks on Prothom Alo and The Daily Star were something we had never seen before. It was an attack on the independent media. Intimidation, arson, destruction of lives and property, and vandalism cannot be part of a civilised society."

Referring to the BNP's mandate, the foreign minister said, "This mandate is the strongest in Bangladesh's history. From the government's side, we will keep our word."

Expressing sympathy for the Prothom Alo and The Daily Star families, he said he hoped they would rebuild their institutions from the rubble and ashes and resume their work as truly independent media in Bangladesh.

Information and Broadcasting Minister Zahir Uddin Swapan reaffirmed the government's commitment to ensuring media freedom, describing any attack on the press as an attack on civilisation itself. "We are pledge-bound to protect press freedom. A close look at the trail of destruction suggests that an anti-civilisation mindset was at work."

Adviser Zahed Ur Rahman said a certain quarter had "manufactured consent" over a long period to carry out the attack. "We have ousted Sheikh Hasina's autocracy and fascism. We will not allow fascism to be re-established here. We did not fight to have newspapers shut down; we fought to build a democratic Bangladesh."

Later, the US Ambassador to Bangladesh Brent T Christensen also visited the exhibition at the Prothom Alo office, as did politicians, writers, journalists, artists and representatives of civil society.

During his visit to The Daily Star, the home minister, accompanied by the newspaper's Editor and Publisher Mahfuz Anam, examined the heavily damaged ground, first and second floors before visiting the newsroom.

DMP Acting Commissioner Md Sarwar, Deputy Commissioner (Tejgaon Division) Ibne Mizan, DB Chief Shafiqul Islam, along with other police officials, also visited both newspaper offices.

Following the twin attacks on the two dailies on December 18, two cases were filed -- one by Prothom Alo and one by The Daily Star -- on December 22. So far, 37 people have been arrested.

The court set March 8 for the probe report in The Daily Star case and March 5 in the Prothom Alo case.

7 held over rape

FROM PAGE 12

Begum, filed a case with Madhabdi Police Station on Thursday night.

Earlier, the girl's father, Ashraf Ali, alleged that Nurul and four to five associates abducted her on her way home and raped her.

"After that, Nur kept stalking my daughter. Feeling insecure, we decided to send her to a safer place," he said, adding that on Wednesday night, he was taking his daughter to a relative's house when Nurul and his associates intercepted them around 10:00pm in Boroitala area and abducted her.

Meanwhile, Ahmed Ali Dewan, who was earlier arrested in the case, was expelled from his position as vice president of Mahishashur union BNP on Friday.

Amena's family claimed they went to Ahmad Ali Dewan, who was a former member of the union parishad, to seek justice when the rape incident took place.

"Then, he arranged a Salish [social arbitration] to settle the issue. But he did not take any action against the rapists. Instead, he advocated for the rapists and shifted the blame on my daughter. He asked us to leave the area by March 1," Fahima told journalists yesterday.

She further alleged, "Ahmad Ali made the decision after taking a Tk 8,000 bribe from the rapists. We were also threatened in many ways to suppress the incident."

Ashraf said, "We rejected the decision and attempted to file a complaint with police. But we were threatened with death."

Ahmed Ali denied mediating any arbitration and said he was not home when the family came to see him that night.

About the allegation, SP Faruk said it was being investigated.

Govt keeps NTMC

FROM PAGE 12

2025, formally abolishing the NTMC and paving the way for a new body named the Centre for Information Support (CIS) to function as the sole interception hub.

Under the ordinance, the CIS would operate under the home ministry but would not be able to initiate interception on its own. It would "only perform interception based on a request received from an authorised agency and approved by a court or review council". The NTMC was to transfer all equipment to the CIS.

Now the ministry letter effectively revives the NTMC for one year.

Earlier, on February 11, a day before the general election, a government committee reviewing surveillance and technology procurement submitted its final report to former chief adviser Muhammad Yunus. The report examined the NTMC's operations and the broader lawful interception framework in Bangladesh.

It found that the NTMC's activities were not governed by a distinct and clear law and that there was no mandatory requirement for judicial approval before intercepting personal communications.

"Reliance on administrative orders and broad discretionary powers left the scope and conditions of surveillance ambiguous, creating a risk of structural abuse," the report said.

Although "national security" and "public order" were cited as general objectives, the committee found no verifiable documentation explaining how specific targets or situations justified surveillance measures.

"There is no institutional evidence to show whether surveillance was truly necessary or conducted using the least intrusive means. Consequently, it transformed from an exceptional power into a routine practice," the report added.

The NTMC was unable to provide documentation detailing who initiated interceptions, when they were carried out, and on what grounds.

The committee also noted that although the roles of the Bangladesh Telecommunication Regulatory Commission, the NTMC and relevant ministries were interconnected, most actions relied on verbal or informal instructions rather than formal written orders.

Pak, Afghan forces

FROM PAGE 12

'FEAR OF LONG WAR'

The fighting has raised the risk of a protracted conflict along the rugged 2,600-km (1,600-mile) frontier.

Diplomatic efforts gathered pace late on Friday as Afghanistan said its foreign minister, Amir Khan Muttaqi, had spoken with Saudi Arabia's Prince Faisal bin Farhan about reducing tensions and keeping diplomatic channels open.

The European Union urged both sides to de-escalate and engage in dialogue, while the United Nations urged an immediate end to hostilities.

Russia urged a return to talks, while China said it was deeply concerned and ready to help ease tensions.

The U.S. State Department said the U.S. supported Pakistan's right to defend itself against attacks by the Taliban.

A U.S. official, speaking on condition of anonymity, said Washington did not view Pakistan as the aggressor and that Islamabad was under pressure to address security challenges. Exchanges of fire continued along the border overnight.

Pakistani security sources said an operation dubbed "Ghazab Lil Haq" was ongoing and that Pakistani forces had destroyed numerous Taliban posts and camps. Reuters could not independently verify the claims.

Both sides have reported heavy losses. Pakistan said 12 of its soldiers and 274 Taliban had been killed, while the Taliban said 13 of its fighters and 110 Pakistani soldiers had died.

Taliban deputy spokesman Hamdullah Fitrat said 52 civilians had been killed and 66 wounded in the Khost and Paktika provinces. Reuters could not verify the figures.

Pakistani Defence Minister Khawaja Muhammad Asif said Islamabad's patience had run out and described the fighting as "open war".

Taliban Interior Minister Sirajuddin Haqqani said in a speech that the conflict would be "very costly" and that Afghan forces had not deployed broadly beyond those already engaged.

Tarique joins Jamaat

FROM PAGE 12

repression, enforced disappearances and killings in the struggle for democracy.

"Today, the people of Bangladesh are looking at all of us, especially political parties, with great expectation and aspiration," Tarique added.

Presiding over the programme, Jamaat Ameer and Leader of the Opposition Shafiqur Rahman said that after what he described as "a prolonged fascist rule", a "revolution" had taken place in the country on "36 July of 24", led by youths.

"We all joined that movement, irrespective of party affiliation."

After a long wait, the election led to the formation of parliament and government, he said, adding that the people now have huge expectations from both.

Jamaat does not want to play a routine or conventional opposition role in the Jatiya Sangsad.

"We want this parliament to be meaningful and the centre of fulfilling all the people's demands. Just as the ruling party must play a responsible role, we also want to play a responsible and constructive role from the opposition."

Referring to past elections, he said the opposition then was ornamental. "Such an opposition cannot bring any good message for any country."

Jamaat would extend full support and cooperation to all reasonable steps taken by the government.

"But if, in our consideration, we see that the government has taken any inappropriate decision or step, we will first draw attention to it, and then offer cooperation."

If the government accepts the suggestions, the opposition will be grateful and the nation will benefit.

"If the government does not accept our advice, we will perform the role of the opposition. We will stand in favour of national rights and call upon the nation to stand with us."

Expressing hope that the BNP government would turn the parliament into a vehicle for moving the country forward, Shafiqur said no vehicle runs on one wheel.

"At least two wheels are needed. If the ruling party is the front wheel, the opposition will be the rear wheel," he said, adding that Jamaat sought coordination and mutual respect in the path ahead.

The Jatiya Sangsad will be the centre for resolving the country's problems.

"We will collectively try to remove the black laws that still remain in our constitution."

Shafiqur recalled the late Jamaat leader Delwar Hossain Sayedee, who was sentenced to life imprisonment in a crime against humanity case. He questioned the trials of other Jamaat leaders during the Awami League tenure.

After his speech, Mamunul Haque of Bangladesh Khelafat Majlis, part of the Jamaat-led 11-party alliance, conducted a prayer, while the programme was moderated by Ahsanul Mahboob Zubair, the chief of Jamaat's Central Publicity & Media Department.

Book fair yet to gain momentum

FROM PAGE 3

An employee of Somoy Prokashoni said crowds tend to grow after iftar.

"Many people cannot come during the daytime due to fasting. But after iftar and prayers, the fair becomes livelier," he said.

A total of 38 new books were released at the fair yesterday.

Earlier in the morning, a preliminary round of a children's music competition was held on the fair premises, with 347 participants competing across three categories. Mohammad Azam, director general of Bangla Academy, inaugurated the event. The final round is scheduled for March 7.

Later in the afternoon, a discussion titled "In Remembrance: Ahmed Rafiq" was held at the main stage.

Ismail Sadi presented the keynote paper. Professor Mansur Musa chaired the session, while Mustafa Tarikul Ahsan took part in the discussion.

Ensure justice

FROM PAGE 4

said while the head of government, ministers and MPs enjoy state security facilities, the government has failed to ensure the safety of people's lives and property.

She expressed anger over allegations that police were reluctant to file a case after a child was raped in Rampura and that the victim's family was advised to hush up the incident.

She also alleged that incidents of rape and murder of women and children do not receive due importance in the mainstream media, urging journalists to focus on public interest rather than praising the government.

Marzia Begum, central assistant secretary and a member of the party's shura, presented the 10-point demands.

These include the immediate arrest of perpetrators and exemplary punishment; ending the culture of impunity; ensuring neutral investigations and transparent trials; investigating police negligence in filing cases and taking departmental action against those responsible; ensuring maximum punishment through speedy trial tribunals; and adopting effective long-term policies to protect women and children.

The speakers also urged the law minister and the home minister to announce a specific timeframe for the trial of such incidents.

Advocate Sabikun Nahar Munni, central secretary for law and human resources of the women's wing, and Jannatul Karim Sweety, assistant secretary of the Dhaka South unit of the women's wing, also spoke.

Need stronger

FROM PAGE 4

said, "This is not a full roadmap. A comprehensive education plan must be developed," and proposed forming a task force to prepare it.

Professor Shah Shamim Ahmed of the Institute of Education and Research at Dhaka University said a mandatory third language alongside Bangla and English should align with labour migration patterns. "A large number of our people work abroad. Language is a major issue," he said.

The programme was chaired by Ahmed Mushtaque Raza Chowdhury, convener of Education Watch. Jyoti F Gomes, general secretary of the Bangladesh Catholic Education Board, also spoke.

State Minister for Education, Primary and Mass Education Bobby Hajjaj unveiled the 12-point agenda on February 19, saying education spending would be raised to 5 percent of GDP in phases and 15–20 percent of total government expenditure allocated to the sector.

The agenda also includes governance reforms, milestone-based project implementation, technical education from the secondary level, exam reforms, research grants and student loan schemes, among others.

Bangla must

FROM PAGE 3

"Language has always functioned both as a tool of oppression and resistance -- from the imposition of Urdu in 1952 to the slogans heard in 2024. Words carry the imprint of political realities," she added.

Writer Ahmed Mostafa Kamal offered a more optimistic view, dismissing concerns about the decline of Bangla.

He said the language's resilience lies in its strong oral tradition and vast literary heritage.

"Bangla is not under threat in the way many indigenous languages are. With around 180 million speakers in Bangladesh and millions more in West Bengal and across the diaspora, this language cannot simply be taken away. It is alive and constantly evolving," he said.

The discussion was moderated by Imran Mahfuz.

PM for faster

FROM PAGE 3

During the meeting, Tarique sought their cooperation in implementing his election manifesto, Rumon added.

Prime Minister's advisers Mirza Abbas, Ismail Zabiullah, Humayun Kabir, Rashed Al Mahmud Titumir, Brig Gen (retd) ATM Shamsul Islam and Zahedur Rahman were present, along with Principal Secretary ABM Abdus Sattar.

Tarique Rahman assumed office as Prime Minister on February 17. Since then, he has been attending office every Saturday despite the weekly government holiday.

Last Saturday, he worked at the PMO in Tejgaon for the first time.

NCP eyes stronger grassroots

FROM PAGE 3

prepare for the upcoming local government elections.

He was speaking at the party's founding anniversary programme at Abahani Sports Ground in Dhanmondi.

"The country has emerged from fascist rule; now the goal is to fully establish democracy. Our movement to implement the necessary reforms, the July Charter, and the referendum verdict will continue," he added.

He said this year's founding anniversary theme is: "The country will move on a new path -- no return to fascism; revolution, alternative and reconstruction."

Nahid said alternative leadership had emerged from the strength of the revolution to build a new Bangladesh. The NCP would remain vocal in demanding justice for those involved in genocide, enforced disappearances and killings, he added.

On the party's ideological foundations, he said movements such as the 2013 Hefazat-e-Islam agitation, the 2018 quota reform and safe roads movements, anti-VAT protests, the Pilkhana massacre, and continued student protests against discrimination shaped the political context from which the party emerged.

Although the NCP was formally founded on February 28, 2025, its roots lie in the July uprising, he said.

Home Minister Salahuddin Ahmed congratulated the NCP leadership and activists, saying the party represented new hope in politics.

Jamaat-e-Islami Secretary General Mia Golam Parwar said public support for the 11-party alliance was encouraging and pledged efforts towards national reconstruction.

A three-minute and 45-second documentary highlighting the party's journey -- from the July uprising to its participation in national elections -- was screened at the event.

Among others present were Road Transport and Bridges, Railways and Shipping Minister Sheikh Rabiul Alam; poet and thinker Farhad Mazhar; AB Party Chairman Mujibur Rahman Manju; NCP Member Secretary and Rangpur-4 MP Akhter Hossan; Chief Organiser (northern region) Sarjis Alam; Chief Organiser (southern region) Hasnat Abdullah; spokesperson Asif Mahmud Shojib Bhuiyan; and leaders from central and district units.

403 students died by suicide

FROM PAGE 3

while 23 percent were attributed to resentment or emotional turmoil.

The data also show that schoolchildren accounted for the highest number of suicides, making up 47.4 percent of the total.

Aachol Foundation described this figure as particularly alarming, noting that school-going children are usually at the early stage of adolescence, a period marked by heightened emotional and psychological vulnerability.

At the college level, 92 students died by suicide, representing 22.8 percent of the total.

Universities reported 77 cases, or 19.1 percent, while madrasas accounted for 44 cases, or 10.7 percent.

The highest number of suicides was reported in Dhaka division -- 118 students, or 29.2 percent of the total. Chattogram division followed with 63 cases (15.6 percent), Barishal with 57 (14.4 percent), and Rajshahi with 50 (12 percent).

Aachol suggested that population density, urbanisation, competitive education systems, and family disconnection may contribute to the higher rates in Dhaka.

To address the crisis, the organisation urged authorities to introduce mental health services and screening in all educational institutions.

It recommended training teachers and peers to identify signs of stress, depression, or anxiety among students.

It also called for awareness campaigns in the media, posters, and social platforms to reduce stigma surrounding suicide and mental health.

In addition, it suggested psychosocial training for primary school teachers and regular mental health awareness programmes in schools to strengthen connections between students and parents.

253 incidents

FROM PAGE 3

In 57 post-election incidents, five people, including a child, were killed and 311 others injured.

MSF also reported that 40 leaders and activists of the Awami League and its affiliated organisations were arrested in February in different cases.

Regarding violence against women and children, MSF said 253 incidents were recorded in February, four fewer than in the previous month. The incidents include 33 rapes, 12 gang rapes, and five incidents of rape followed by murder. Among the rape survivors were six adolescent girls and women with disabilities.

The MSF report also said six Bangladeshi nationals were tortured by Indian citizens in the presence of India's Border Security Force (BSF) personnel. A Bangladeshi fishing boat, along with 28 fishermen, was detained from the Bay of Bengal by the Indian Coast Guard.

A child from Teknaf, who had been critically injured by gunfire from across the Myanmar border last month, died while undergoing treatment.

Separately, five fishermen were detained along with their trawler by Myanmar's armed group Arakan Army, in the Naf River in Teknaf, Cox's Bazar.

MSF stressed for effective accountability, impartial investigations and preventive measures to control the situation.

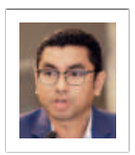
EMBASSY OF DENMARK | The Daily Star | blast ব্লাস্ট | সেন্টার ফর পলিসি ডায়লগ (সিপিডি) Centre for Policy Dialogue (CPD)

Electoral Commitments on Addressing Discrimination against Women and Family Rights

A roundtable titled "Electoral Commitments on Addressing Discrimination against Women and Family Rights" was held on Monday, 2 February 2026, organised by the Centre for Policy Dialogue (CPD), The Daily Star, Bangladesh Legal Aid and Services Trust (BLAST), and the Danish Embassy. Political leaders, legal experts, and civil society representatives came together to discuss about the urgent need to improve family laws, protect women's safety, improve inclusion, and provide better legal aid for women. The discussion focused on what political parties plan to do about these issues in their election plans. Speakers urged political parties to make clear promises to end discrimination against women and ensure they have equal rights and access to justice within families.

DR FAHMIDA KHATUN
Executive Director
Centre for Policy Dialogue (CPD)

Electoral commitments to address discrimination against women and ensuring women's rights within the family carry particular significance as the national election approaches. The focus remains on four critical areas: remedies for violence against women, access to justice and family courts, legal discrimination within the existing family laws, and women's representation in judicial institutions. Despite existing laws and policies, weak implementation, limited survivor-centric support, and inadequate compensation mechanisms continue to hinder justice for women. Access to family courts, legal aid, and support services remains constrained, especially for marginalised groups. Persistent structural inequalities in inheritance, maintenance, guardianship, and child custody highlight the need for evidence-based legal reform and strong political will. Ensuring inclusive, gender-sensitive institutions with meaningful participation of women across the justice system is essential to achieving equality, dignity, and accountability for women and families in Bangladesh.



TANJIM FERDOUS
Head of Strategic Partnerships
The Daily Star

Electoral commitments on addressing discrimination against women and ensuring women's rights within the family demand urgent scrutiny. Despite decades of laws against violence, domestic abuse, acid attacks, and cyber harassment, many women still struggle to access timely justice, and accountability remains inconsistent. Discriminatory family laws on divorce, inheritance, maintenance, child custody and guardianship continue to undermine women's safety, dignity, and economic security throughout their lives. The focus now must be on concrete actions rather than rhetoric. The responsibility now lies with political parties to deliver effective remedies for survivors, ensure accessible justice and health services for all women, eliminate legal discrimination within family laws, and guarantee women's meaningful representation across courts, police, justice institutions and decision-making process.

BARRISTER SARA HOSSAIN
Honorary Executive Director
Bangladesh Legal Aid and Services Trust

This roundtable discussion was held on political commitments to eliminating discrimination, with a focus on women's rights. While parties have announced election promises and manifestos, clarity remains limited on concrete plans to address inequality highlighted during the July mass movement. The Constitution guarantees non-discrimination, equal rights for women and men, and special measures for marginalised groups, yet gaps exist between laws and practices. Recent ordinances on violence against women, sexual harassment, and witness protection were examined, alongside questions about their future implementation. Persistent discrimination in personal and family laws across religious communities, particularly in marriage, divorce, maintenance, custody, and inheritance, remains a critical concern. Women's underrepresentation in institutions also needs consideration from political parties. From today's discussion, it's clear that we need political will, data-driven policymaking, and sustained engagement with women across communities to advance equality.

HUMAYRA NOOR
Member
National Citizen Party (NCP)

Despite constitutional guarantees, multiple protection laws, and Bangladesh's international commitments including CEDAW, effective protection for women remains weak due to gaps in implementation. Survivors of violence often face barriers when seeking justice, including reluctance at police stations to record complaints or general diaries, alongside discouraging attitudes that undermine access to remedies. NCP highlighted several commitments to strengthen protection and accountability. These include establishing dedicated cells in police stations staffed by women officers, ensuring fast-track justice for cases of violence against women with necessary legal ratification, and safeguarding survivors' confidentiality and security throughout legal proceedings. Broader priorities also include improving workplace support such as maternity leave, childcare facilities, safer public transport for working women, and expanding opportunities for women entrepreneurs. The emphasis remains on translating legal commitments into practical protection through stronger implementation and sustained political will.

MAHMUDA HABIBA
Member
BNP Media Cell

Women's safety today demands action on two parallel fronts: physical violence and the rapidly expanding threat of online abuse. Digital harm spreads instantly and publicly, so removing content alone cannot undo the damage. Effective enforcement of existing laws must be the starting point to protect women. Punishment by itself is not enough. Victims require rehabilitation, psychological support, and long-term protection. Training girls from school age on online safety is as necessary as teaching physical self-defence. Beyond awareness, women must be embedded across every decision-making layer, from police and healthcare to professions and the judiciary. Without balanced representation, systems fail victims repeatedly. Community-level, one-stop solutions with dedicated budgets are essential, particularly in marginalised regions. Legal reform, especially through accessible civil law options, must proceed carefully with community engagement. Education remains a strong equaliser, alongside transparent political processes and support for women entrepreneurs. Even moments of political transition reveal how deeply women's exclusion is rooted, underscoring the urgency for structural change rather than symbolic discussion.

DR. HABIBA AKTER CHOWDHURY
Central Working Council Member and Political Secretary
Bangladesh Jamaat-e-Islami

Women's suffering appears in many forms, such as financial insecurity, social exclusion, abuse, and prolonged mental distress. At the core lies a crisis of identity. Despite forming half of the population, women continue to be perceived as weak, economically dependent, and lacking authority, especially within male-dominated systems of justice. This mindset must change. Education remains the most powerful instrument, beginning within the family. Moral education for children should begin with parents acting as role models at home from an early age. Matters like property or divorce should be settled under Muslim family law, while other religious communities may follow their own legal systems. Women's representation across professions and leadership spaces is essential, and no field should be closed to them. Our political support and cooperation for women candidates through alliances reflects our commitment to inclusion.

LUNA NOOR
Central Committee Member
Communist Party of Bangladesh

Communist Party of Bangladesh emphasised its commitment to building an equal society by addressing both gender and class discrimination and ensuring equal rights for all. The party reiterated its longstanding support for the full implementation of the CEDAW Convention and the introduction of a uniform family code grounded in civil law to address persistent legal and family-based discrimination. While acknowledging the presence of progressive laws and constitutional guarantees, it was stressed that enforcement remains a major gap, limiting real progress for women. Alongside legal reform, the party highlighted the importance of strengthening institutions that support survivors, including Violence Suppression Cells (VSC) and One-Stop Crisis Centres (OCC), to improve access to protection and justice. The discussion also underscored that legal and institutional reform must be accompanied by broader social change, with political commitment needed to challenge discrimination embedded in economic, social, familial, and cultural structures.

SAIKAT ARIF
Ganosanhati Andolon

Gender equality and women's rights are fundamental, and all individuals must have equal rights. Following the July uprising, women who actively participated have faced severe political harassment. In universities, debate over freedom of dress has intensified. Women who do not wear explicitly religious attire, such as the burqa or hijab, are being singled out online through harassment, moral policing, and distorted portrayals, causing significant trauma. An election to form a reform council is critical to ensure that laws are democratic and equitable for all. While participants in the campus quota reform movement initially supported a 5 per cent quota for women in government recruitment, the broader movement made discussion of quotas difficult. Nevertheless, quotas remain essential for women, ethnic minorities, and other marginalised groups, and structural improvements are necessary. Positive action, including quotas for indigenous and ethnic minorities, is vital to achieving social equity.

M NIAZ ASADULLAH
Visiting Professor of Economics
University of Reading, UK

Child marriage remains one of the most persistent structural challenges to women's empowerment in Bangladesh. It continues to restrict women's life choices, despite progress in education and poverty reduction. While political commitments to women's higher education are common, they can appear contradictory when regressive norms around the age of marriage persist. Legal reform, particularly the 2017 amendment to the Child Marriage Restraint Act, marked an important step; however, evidence from the field shows significant backlash, with families often accelerating marriages rather than complying. This highlights the limits of criminalisation when the law confronts entrenched social practices without broader social readiness. Meaningful change therefore requires political preparedness to manage conservative resistance, alongside innovative, community-based approaches that empower young people, especially girls, as local change agents.

MAHEEN SULTAN
Senior Fellow
BRAC Institute of Governance and Development

Research consistently shows that political and bureaucratic commitment weakens at the point of implementation, even when policies and laws appear progressive. Legal reform alone is only the first step; implementation faces different barriers and backlash. Studies on women's justice journeys reveal critical gaps in information, guidance, and financial support. Moreover, rural women cannot navigate legal systems alone and rely on community facilitators and paralegals. Economic insecurity remains the greatest obstacle, forcing survivors of violence to return to abusive situations. Although social protection strategies and legal aid frameworks exist, they are rarely funded or implemented. Without sustained government financing and budgetary commitment, even the strongest laws will fail to protect women.

BANANI BISWAS
General Secretary
Bangladesh Dalit and Indigenous Women Federation

Political parties frequently invoke popular mandate and the will of voters, yet ignore the voices of Hindu women, who make up a significant portion of the electorate. Hindu women have long demanded equal inheritance, marriage registration, and divorce laws, but reforms are stalled at the behest of religious leaders rather than voters. Electoral support is given to parties, not to communal leadership, and grassroots voters decide independently. The promise of an anti-discrimination state remains unfulfilled, despite years of advocacy by marginalised communities. If equality truly guides governance, political parties must move beyond rhetoric and commit to concrete legal reforms that ensure justice, dignity, and equal rights for all citizens.

RINA ROY
Naripokkho

Political parties often argue that laws must align with religious beliefs, yet in reality many communities, especially Hindu and Buddhist women, have no effective legal protections at all. Women's rights groups have raised these issues since the 1990s, but political parties have consistently ignored them. What is needed now is not rhetoric but clear written commitments in election manifestos to eliminate discriminatory laws. Citizenship, not community leadership, must be the basis of rights. Women should not have to depend on families or religious authorities for justice. A civil legal option must exist to guarantee equal inheritance and family rights. The state must lead this reform, grounded in existing research and decades of activism.

MD AMIRUL HUQ TUHIN
Advocate
Supreme Court of Bangladesh, Panel Lawyer, BLAST

Political parties still hesitate to acknowledge legal discrimination against women fully. Ahead of the election, party manifestos should reflect concrete commitments to gender equality, yet few do so clearly and many do not publish a concrete manifesto at all. The NCP manifesto stands out by proposing inheritance reforms that protect parents' freedom while ensuring children's legal rights and expanding citizens' choices beyond religious prescriptions, a positive step. However, explicit plans to address custody and guardianship remain absent, leaving women legally disadvantaged despite their central role in family and economic life. Political parties must translate their responsibilities into actionable policies by embedding anti-discrimination measures in their manifestos.

FAWZIA KARIM FIROZE
Senior Advocate and Member
Women's Commission

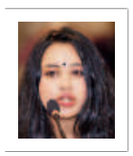
Political parties frequently speak of empowerment, yet fail to present measurable commitments or practical outcomes. As a lawyer, I witness daily how unclear laws, lack of judicial training, and poor access to information deny women justice. Victim Support Centres, once a point of national pride, are now collapsing due to the absence of budgetary support, staff protection, and sustained media attention. Decades after independence, women's rights remain conditional and debated, while political parties delay publishing manifestos and avoid concrete agendas. Reports such as that of the Women's Commission have been ignored, and religion continues to be misused to justify inequality despite progressive examples from other Muslim countries. Without clear policies, budgets, and accountability, women will continue to suffer systemic neglect, regardless of legal reforms.

KARISHMA JAHAN
Advocate
Supreme Court of Bangladesh

We speak often of gender equality, yet these principles remain abstract because there are no enforcement mechanisms or consequences for non-compliance. Commitments such as minimum representation are routinely ignored, resulting in alarmingly low participation of women across political parties, with the situation most severe in Jamaat-e-Islami despite its long history. The absence of binding requirements, whether in party constitutions or electoral laws, allows exclusion to exist unchecked. This failure extends beyond politics to institutions such as the judiciary and police, where no statutory framework ensures women's inclusion. Until women are meaningfully integrated into all systems of power through enforceable measures, genuine improvement in their status in Bangladesh will remain impossible.

FERDOUS ARA RUMEE
Organiser
Sampriti Jatra

Political parties have yet to demonstrate the level of commitment expected in advancing women's representation. Current figures show stark underrepresentation across parties, despite pledges to ensure a minimum of 5% representation. In some political parties, women are entirely excluded from leadership positions, raising serious constitutional concerns. At the same time, violence and harassment against women, both online and offline, have intensified since the July movement, particularly targeting women activists. Much of this abuse has come from religion-based political groups, yet political parties have largely failed to issue strong protests. Instead, civil society has borne the burden of resistance, often facing further cyberbullying, character assassination, and slut-shaming. Therefore, the need for clear accountability and concrete measures is urgent.



PRAPTI TAPOSHI
Organiser
Shekol Bhangar Podojatra

We need greater clarity from political parties regarding their commitments to women's rights and legal reform. While some parties expressed positive intent on issues such as civil law reform, clarity was missing, particularly regarding a uniform family law. Critical concerns remain around women's denial of legal guardianship of their children and the lack of reform of outdated custody laws. Encouraging initiatives like expanding One-Stop Crisis Centres must be matched with the enforcement of sexual harassment prevention mechanisms, long mandated by the courts but rarely implemented. Without firm political commitment and accountability, women's rights will continue to remain rhetorical rather than real.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Political parties should include clear, actionable commitments in their manifestos to eliminate legal discrimination against women in family laws, inheritance, maintenance, and custody.
- The government must ensure accessible, adequately funded legal aid, family courts, and support services for all women, especially marginalised groups.
- Women's meaningful representation must be mandated across political parties, the judiciary, law enforcement, and decision-making institutions through enforceable mechanisms.
- Comprehensive measures are needed to protect women from physical and digital violence, including rehabilitation, education, and community-level support.
- Social and legal reforms, including a Uniform Family Code and enforcement of existing laws, should be accompanied by public awareness, community engagement, and targeted support for women.

City Edition

Star SPORT

DHAKA SUNDAY MARCH 1, 2026, FALGUN 16, 1432 BS

What to WATCH

T SPORTS
T20 World Cup
Zimbabwe VS South Africa
Live from 3:30 pm

India VS West Indies

STAR SPORTS SELECT HD1 & HD2
Premier League
Man United vs Palace
Live from 7:30 pm

Fulham vs Tottenham
Live from 8:00 pm

Arsenal vs Chelsea
Live from 8:00 pm

Live from 10:30 pm

NZ in semis as Pakistan miss out despite win

T20 World Cup's most in-form batter Sahibzada Farhan once again delivered for Pakistan in their final Super Eight fixture against already eliminated Sri Lanka, smashing his second T20I hundred while breaking a number of records. Farhan and Fakhar Zaman (84 off 42) stitched a mammoth 176-run opening stand -- the highest ever in a T20 World Cup game -- as Pakistan posted 212 for eight. Farhan, who scored 100 off 60 balls, reached another milestone as well. With 383 runs in seven matches, the right-handed opener amassed the most runs by any batter in a single edition of the World Cup, surpassing India's Virat Kohli, who had scored 319 in six games in 2014. (Inset) Pakistan won the match by five runs despite a late onslaught from Sri Lanka skipper Dasun Shanaka (76 not out off 31), but the victory wasn't enough for them to sneak into the semifinals as New Zealand grabbed the last-four spot. PHOTO: AFP

India-Windies 'quarterfinal' today

AGENCIES

The Super Eight stage of the ICC T20 World Cup reaches a thrilling climax as defending champions India take on the West Indies on Sunday at the Eden Gardens in Kolkata in a virtual quarterfinal. With semifinal qualification on the line, this Group 1 clash promises fireworks for fans.

India entered the Super 8s in imperious form, winning all four of their Group A matches, including a commanding 61-run victory over archrivals Pakistan.

However, a 76-run defeat to South Africa in their opening Super 8 fixture left India's semifinal hopes hanging by a thread. India bounced back strongly after that loss, defeating Zimbabwe to keep their campaign alive.

With 2 points and a net run rate of -0.100, India must beat the Caribbean side to secure a spot in the last four. A win would likely see them finish second in Group 1 and face the top team from Group 2 in the semifinals.

The West Indies, two-time T20 champions, are renowned for their fearless, power-hitting approach. They topped Group C with ease and have consistently entertained with explosive batting and acrobatic fielding.

Despite a nine-wicket loss to South Africa in their second Super Eight match, the Caribbean side remain in contention. Sitting second in the table with 2 points and a net run rate of 1.791, they too need a victory to guarantee a semifinal berth.

Historically, the rivalry is evenly poised. In the

last five head-to-head encounters, West Indies have won three, India two, with four of those victories coming while chasing. Both teams have won five of their last six matches, highlighting the balanced nature of this contest.

The Eden Gardens pitch, traditionally a batter's paradise, offers pace and bounce with quick outfields and relatively short boundaries, promising a high-scoring affair. Spinners could play a decisive role in the middle overs as the pitch begins to grip.

Elsewhere in the tournament, South Africa have already secured their semifinal spot as the only unbeaten side in the group, while Zimbabwe, out of contention, have enjoyed their best T20 World Cup finish yet. Both teams meet in Delhi on Sunday in a celebration of their successful campaigns, with no qualification pressure.

> **"In order to win this tournament, you have to go through India at some point. Tomorrow is that day for us. History could repeat, though it's a different venue and two different teams.**
>
> West Indies coach **Daren Sammy** was recalling his team's semifinal win over India in the 2016 T20 World Cup, where he was captain and went on to lift the trophy.

Prity ready to give her best if given chance

AGENCIES

Young winger Sauravi Akanda Prity said Bangladesh are using their remaining training sessions to correct mistakes and settle into unfamiliar surroundings as the team finalises preparations for their historic debut in the AFC Women's Asian Cup in Australia. Bangladesh will start their campaign against China on March 3. Speaking after Saturday's practice session at Jubilee Stadium in Sydney, the youngster revealed that lessons from the team's lone warm-up match -- a 1-1 draw against Western Sydney Wanderers -- had shaped recent training. For the Bangladesh team, the tournament represents their first exposure to Asia's biggest stage.

****Read the full story on The Daily Star website*

Australia look to reignite 'Matildas mania'

AGENCIES

Australia will look to reignite the "Matildas mania" that gripped the nation during their 2023 Women's World Cup run as they begin their bid for a second Women's Asian Cup title on home soil.

The Sam Kerr-captained Matildas open the 21st Asian Cup on Sunday against the Philippines in Perth, seeking a convincing win to set the tone in the 12-nation tournament.

A strong start in front of a big home crowd would go a long way toward restoring the energy that once made them the country's most celebrated team.

During the 2023 FIFA Women's World Cup, co-hosted with New Zealand, Australia surged to the semifinals and captivated the nation.

Sell-out crowds followed them across the country, and they went on to play 16 successive home matches in front of packed stadiums through much of 2024.

That unprecedented support encouraged Australia to bid confidently for the Asian Cup, promising to fill major venues in Perth, Sydney and the Gold Coast.

This time, however, the buildup has been more subdued. Tickets remain available for group matches and the public buzz has been noticeably quieter.

Once dubbed "Australia's favourite team," the Matildas have come back down to earth since the World Cup, when ambitions of becoming a genuine global force seemed

realistic rather than aspirational.

The downturn coincided with the loss of captain Sam Kerr to an ACL injury. Without their talismanic striker, Australia exited in the group stage of the 2024 Paris Olympics and slipped to a record low world ranking of 16th.

Despite outside criticism, new coach Joe Montemurro reinstated Kerr as captain upon her return last October, signalling stability and renewed belief.

Montemurro has set high expectations. Australia's only Women's Asian Cup triumph came in 2010, when they defeated North Korea on penalties in China. Lifting the trophy again at home would represent both redemption and a statement of intent.

The Asian Football Confederation (AFC) believes the tournament can build on the legacy of 2023.

AFC General Secretary Windsor John has said expectations are that this edition will set a new benchmark for quality, professionalism and global visibility, pointing to Australia's World Cup infrastructure and operational experience as a strong foundation.

The governing body views the event as a chance to consolidate recent progress and strengthen the Asian Cup's identity as the continent's premier women's national team competition.

On the field, defending champions China are chasing a 10th title, while Japan, winners in 2014 and 2018, aim to reclaim the crown. With World Cup qualification spots for Brazil 2027 also on offer, the stakes are high across the continent.

Jishan, Mosaddek guide Central into BCL final

SPORTS REPORTER

Central Zone rode on Jishan Alam's maiden List A century and Mosaddek Hossain's unbeaten half-century to secure a thrilling two-wicket win over North Zone and reach the final of the Bangladesh Cricket League (BCL) one-day competition at Rajshahi Divisional Stadium on Saturday.

Despite the defeat, North Zone also advanced to the final after winning their first two matches. Their place was confirmed when East Zone edged South Zone by one wicket in the final league match in Bogura.

Central Zone and North Zone both finished on four points and will meet again in the day-night final at the Sher-e-Bangla National Cricket Stadium in Mirpur on March 3.

Chasing 323 to qualify for the final, Central Zone were powered by Jishan's superb 127 off 93 balls and Mahfijul Islam Robin's 54, which guided them to 249 for four after 42 overs.

North Zone fought back strongly as Rishad Hossain took three wickets while Meherob Hasan and Shoriful Islam claimed two wickets each to reduce Central Zone to 278 for eight, leaving 45 runs required from the last four overs.

Mosaddek then turned the match with a decisive unbeaten knock, striking four fours and four sixes in a composed finish. Needing eight runs in the final over, he struck a boundary and a six to seal victory with four balls remaining.

Earlier, North Zone posted 322 for seven after being sent in to bat, built around Tawhid Hridoy's 102 off 113 balls. Tanzid Hasan Tamim made 92 while Sabbir Rahman contributed a rapid 73 off 51 deliveries.

For Central Zone, Abu Hider Rony claimed four wickets and Ripon Mondol took two.

TENSION IN MIDDLE EAST

Mushfiqur stranded in Jeddah

Bangladesh wicketkeeper-batter Mushfiqur Rahim has been stranded at the King Abdulaziz International Airport in Jeddah due to the war between USA-Israel and Iran. Mushfiqur shared the update on his official Facebook page on Saturday.

ICC activates contingency plans for stakeholders' safety

The International Cricket Council (ICC) is closely monitoring the evolving situation in the Middle East and has activated comprehensive contingency plans to safeguard the travel, logistics and well-being of all stakeholders associated with the ICC Men's T20 World Cup 2026, currently underway in India and Sri Lanka, it said in a media release on Saturday. While the crisis in the Middle East has no direct bearing on the conduct of the tournament, the ICC acknowledges that a significant number of personnel -- including players, team management, match officials, broadcast teams, and event staff -- rely on Gulf hub airports, particularly Dubai (DXB), as key transit points for onward travel to their home countries upon concluding their commitments at the event.

***Read full stories on The Daily Star's website*

Jacks savours England's 'Brook era'

REUTERS

Will Jacks hailed Harry Brook's impact as England's white-ball captain after their four-wicket win over New Zealand on Friday secured top spot in the Super Eight stage of the T20 World Cup.

Jacks delivered an all-round performance, taking two wickets in four economical overs before adding a brisk 44-run partnership with Rehan Ahmed in England's chase of 160, which they completed with three balls remaining.

Asked whether England's recent form signalled a return to the "Bazball" style of play popularised by coach Brendon McCullum, Jacks instead pointed to Brook, who struck a 50-ball century against Pakistan in their previous match to seal a semifinal berth and again settled down the innings on Friday after England slipped to 2-2 early in the chase.

"I think this group is the era of Harry Brook. He is our white-ball captain," Jacks told reporters in Colombo.

"And I think that is something that we've been really focusing on. He has got us to play a certain way, and I think the environment around the group led by him is absolutely brilliant.

"Hopefully, everyone can see that we're having fun and we're approaching the game in the right way. And I think that's why we've had some success."

England will face India or West Indies in the semifinals, with the two sides meeting on Sunday. Jacks said England would be ready for either opponent.

"We'll be watching their game Sunday and we'll see the outcome. We'll be prepared and I think we'll go into it with optimism and excitement."

Tarique joins Jamaat iftar programme

Urges working together

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Prime Minister Tarique Rahman yesterday urged political parties to work to change the fate of the people, saying citizens are now looking to them with high expectations and aspirations.

Speaking as the chief guest at an iftar hosted by the Bangladesh Jamaat-e-Islami at the Bangladesh-China Friendship Conference Centre in the capital, the BNP chairperson called for a collective pledge.

"Let us take an oath at this iftar mahfil that our work in the days ahead will be for changing the destiny of the people of this country. Let us pray to the Almighty Allah to grant us the ability to work to improve the lives of the people of this country."

Referring to the recent national election, Tarique said the vote marked the beginning of a new democratic journey.

For more than a decade, people had laid down their lives and endured

SEE PAGE 9 COL 7

Prime Minister and BNP Chairman Tarique Rahman attends an iftar event hosted by the Jamaat-e-Islami at the Bangladesh-China Friendship Conference Centre in the capital yesterday. Jamaat Ameer and Leader of the Opposition Shafiqur Rahman presided over the programme.

PHOTO: BNP MEDIA CELL

Govt keeps NTMC for another year

MAHMUDUL HASAN *and* ZYMA ISLAM

The home ministry has decided to allow the National Telecommunications Monitoring Centre (NTMC) to continue operating for another year, even though the previous interim administration had moved to abolish the much-criticised surveillance agency.

In a letter conveying the decision to NTMC's director general, the ministry said the permission was granted until necessary rules are formulated to fulfill the objectives of the provisions of the Bangladesh Telecommunication Control (Amendment) Ordinance, 2025.

The letter, signed by Deputy Secretary KM Yasir Arafat, is dated February 20.

The fate of the NTMC has been under debate since a draft of the ordinance had proposed abolishing "any previously existing interception agency or telecommunications monitoring centre or platform".

On November 22, former home adviser Jahangir Alam chaired a meeting to discuss whether the NTMC should be scrapped. Among those present were former planning adviser Wahiduddin Mahmud, former special assistant to the chief adviser Faiz Ahmad Taiyeb, and senior officers from the police, Rab, BGB, Ansar and other agencies.

According to a report published by The Daily Star at the time, Taiyeb argued against retaining the NTMC. Senior law enforcement officials, however, pushed for keeping the NTMC or establishing a similar body. Jahangir also leaned towards continuation, while Wahiduddin called for further review.

The final ordinance was approved on December 25,

SEE PAGE 9 COL 7

ATTACKS ON Star, PROTHOM ALO

Home minister orders probe report within two months

Vows exemplary punishment

"With the attacks, a message went to the world that fanatic forces were in a strong position in Bangladesh and could attack any media outlet at will. Our image was tarnished, and we were ashamed."

Home Minister Salahuddin Ahmed

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The unprecedented attacks on Prothom Alo and The Daily Star have tarnished Bangladesh's reputation globally, Home Minister Salahuddin Ahmed said yesterday.

Speaking to reporters after visiting "Alo" (Light), an exhibition portraying Prothom Alo's endeavour to rise from the ruins, at the newspaper's charred building yesterday afternoon, he also said he has directed police to submit charge sheets over the attacks on the newspaper offices within two months following a fair investigation.

Foreign Minister Khalilur Rahman, Information Minister Zahir Uddin Swapan, prime minister's advisers Zahed Ur Rahman and Mahdi Amin, and National Citizen Party leader Sarjis Alam also visited the exhibition, in the presence of Transcom Group Chief Executive Officer Simeen Rahman and Prothom Alo Editor Matiur Rahman.

Afterwards, Salahuddin Ahmed and Khalilur Rahman visited the torched office of The Daily Star on the capital's Kazi Nazrul Islam Avenue. The premises were vandalised and set on fire, trapping 28 journalists and staffers inside at the time.

On the night of December 18, 2025, coordinated mobs attacked and set fire to the offices of two of Bangladesh's leading newspapers and the cultural institution Chhayanaut in Dhaka.

The following evening, the central office of Udichi Shilpigosthi, another

SEE PAGE 9 COL 2

7 held over rape, abduction and murder of teen

Local BNP leader expelled

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Narsingdi*

Seven people have so far been arrested in connection with the abduction, rape and killing of a teenage girl in Narsingdi's Madhabdi upazila of Narsingdi.

The prime accused, Nur Mohammad, 28, locally known as Nura, was arrested from Gazipur, and Hazrat Ali, 40, from Mymensingh on Friday night. The rest were arrested on throughout Thursday and Friday, said police.

All the arrestees were sent to jail through the courts. Police sought a 10-day remand for each of the accused, said Narsingdi Superintendent of Police Md Abdullah-Al-Faruk.

"The hearing on the remand petitions will be held tomorrow [today]," he told reporters at press conferencea press conference at his office yesterday.

Four of the arrestees were directly involved in the rape, he said, adding that the other three allegedly tried to hush up the incident through a local arbitration , he said.

Additional SP Anwar Hossain Shamim said Nur was planning to flee from Bangladeshthe country illegally to avoid arrest.

On Thursday morning, police recovered the body of the 15-year-old, Amena Akter, from a cropland in the upazila. There was a scarf wrapped around the neck.

The victim's mother, Fahima

SEE PAGE 9 COL 5

CPD 'stunned, bewildered' by clauses in US trade deal

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The reciprocal trade agreement between the US and Bangladesh is "highly discriminatory" and must be revoked, said the Centre for Policy Dialogue yesterday.

"We are stunned and bewildered -- I do not know how a government could enter into such an agreement," said CPD Research Director Khondaker Golam Moazzem at a media briefing on the social and economic policies of the new government for the first 180 days and beyond.

Several clauses of the agreement will completely restrict Bangladesh's independence and autonomy in terms of trade and investment with other countries.

For instance, Bangladesh needs to take measures against companies owned by third countries if it results in lower US exports to Bangladesh or a reduction in US exports to third-country markets.

Bangladesh needs to comply with the US's border measures through complementary restrictive measures, which means that if the US bans the entry of goods from a certain company or country, Bangladesh will also have to follow suit.

"If there is one area where the interim government deserves criticism, it is this agreement."

"If there is one area where the interim government deserves criticism, it is this agreement."

CPD Research Director Khondaker Golam Moazzem

In terms of Bangladesh's economic decision-making, this agreement represents a major deviation. However, if it wishes, the new government can still withdraw from the agreement.

There is a clause stating that within 60 days of signing, a government may opt to exit the agreement. Moreover, the notification of the agreement has not yet been exchanged.

The government should engage in discussions with the United States Trade Representative and withdraw from this agreement, and instead pursue a trade agreement that safeguards the interests of both countries.

At the same time, any such agreement should be concluded within the framework of the World Trade Organisation.

The deal will severely jeopardise Bangladesh's smooth graduation from the Least Developed Country (LDC) category as well, Moazzem said, adding that the economic partnership agreement signed with Japan is also a gross deviation from the smooth transition strategies.

If the government follows the conditions of the agreements, it will impact the smooth transition strategy in terms of signing FTA/EPA, trade and investment from the most suitable sources, limiting trade negotiations, restricted FDI and technology transfer from the most suitable sources.

So, the government should immediately take measures to withdraw from such agreements since no notification has yet been exchanged.

The government should also revisit the agreements with Japan, he added.

Pak, Afghan forces clash as diplomatic efforts intensify

REUTERS, *Kabul*

Fighting between Pakistan and Afghanistan's Taliban military entered its third day yesterday as foreign governments expressed increasing concern and called for urgent talks.

- Pakistan strikes military installations in Kabul and Kandahar
- Diplomatic efforts intensify with calls for urgent talks
- Heavy losses reported on both sides

Pakistan's strikes on Friday hit Taliban military installations and posts, some of them in Kabul and Kandahar, in one of the deepest Pakistani incursions into its western neighbour in years, officials said.

Islamabad accuses the Taliban of harbouring Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) militants, who it says are waging an insurgency inside Pakistan, a charge the Taliban denies.

Pakistan said it was responding to cross-border assaults, while Kabul complained of a breach of its sovereignty, saying it remained open to dialogue but warning that any wider conflict would have serious consequences.

SEE PAGE 9 COL 5

Home Minister Salahuddin Ahmed speaks to journalists after visiting the special exhibition held at the burnt Prothom Alo building yesterday. He was accompanied by Foreign Minister Khalilur Rahman, Prime Minister's Adviser Zahed Ur Rahman, Transcom Group Chief Executive Officer Simeen Rahman, and Prothom Alo Editor Matiur Rahman, among others.

PHOTO: COURTESY OF PROTHOM ALO

Private investment hits 11-year low
B1

HASANAH ISLAMI BANKING البنكية الاسلامي
Prime Bank

PRAYER TIMING
MARCH 1

	Fazr	Zohr	Asr	Maghrib	Esha
AZAN	5-08	12-45	4-30	6-03	7-30
JAMAAT	5-18	1-15	4-45	6-13	8-00

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

SEHRI, IFTAR TIMING

RAMADAN	MAR	SEHRI	IFTAR
11	1		6:03
12	2	5:04	6:03
13	3	5:03	6:04