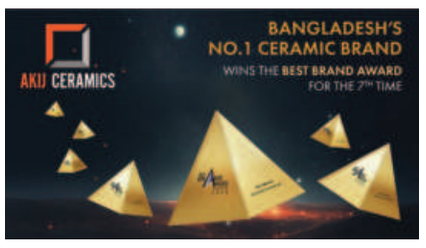

YOUR RIGHT TO KNOW

The Daily Star

SECOND EDITION

DHAKA TUESDAY MARCH 3, 2026

REGD. NO. DA 781 | VOL. XXXVI NO. 48 | FALGUN 18, 1432 BS | www.thedailystar.net | RAMADAN 13, 1447 HIJRI | 16 PAGES PLUS LIFESTYLE : TK 15.00

War escalates

Iran launches missile salvos into Israel, strikes Saudi, Qatar energy sites, UK base in Cyprus; Israel bombards Lebanon; death toll in Iran rises to 555

AGENCIES

The war launched by the United States and Israel against Iran spread across the Middle East and beyond yesterday, with Lebanon's Hezbollah entering the fray and a British air base in Cyprus targeted.

The Israeli military said it began new strikes on Tehran, as AFP reporters in the Iranian capital heard explosions ring out on the third day of the US-Israeli joint assault, and Israeli strikes rocked Lebanon's capital Beirut.

Gulf monarchies threatened to retaliate as a Saudi oil refinery burned, Qatar halted LNG production, tankers were attacked off Oman, and energy prices soared.

Washington's senior military officer, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff General Dan Caine, told reporters that US forces had achieved air superiority over Iran to "allow them to continue the work".

Meanwhile, black smoke rose from the US embassy complex in Kuwait as Iran pressed on with attacks it launched in retaliation for the US and Israeli campaign that killed its supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei.

Also in Kuwait, a US base and a power station were targeted, while three US F-15e Strike Eagle jets were downed by friendly fire. The pilots and weapons officers survived.

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"No stupid rules of engagement, no nation building quagmire, no democracy-building exercise. No politically correct wars. We fight to win and we don't waste time or lives."
Pete Hegseth, US defense secretary

PHOTO: AFP

'Regime change unlikely in Iran'

REUTERS

Following the killing of Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei on Saturday, many senior US officials remain skeptical that the US and Israeli military operation against the Islamic Republic will lead to a regime change in the near term.

Before and after the start of the attack, US officials, including US President Donald Trump, had suggested that toppling the nation's repressive governing system was one of several US goals, in addition to crippling Iran's ballistic missile and nuclear programmes.

"I call upon all Iranian patriots who yearn for freedom to seize this moment ... and take back your country," Trump said on Sunday in a video posted on Truth Social.

But three US officials familiar with US intelligence said there is serious skepticism that Iran's battered opposition can topple the theocratic, authoritarian governing system that has been in place since 1979.

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Smoke billows following Israeli bombardment on Beirut's southern suburbs yesterday.
PHOTO: AFP

Iran says ready for 'long war', rules out talks with US | **Trump sets 4 war goals, says 'big wave' of attack coming** | **US claims achieving 'air superiority' over Iran** | **Israeli strikes kill 51 in Lebanon** | **Qatar halts LPG production amid crisis** | **One in four Americans supports ops** | **Russia, China, Turkey condemn violation of int'l law** | **3 US warplanes shot by 'friendly fire' in Kuwait**

Living in fear in the Middle East

Another Bangladeshi dies in missile attack in Bahrain

MD ABBAS

Bangladeshi expatriates across parts of the Middle East are living in fear and uncertainty after another Bangladeshi was killed and two others were injured in Bahrain yesterday.

A Bangladeshi was killed and five others were hurt in drone and missile attacks in the UAE and Kuwait on Sunday.

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"We never thought something like this could happen here. Now every loud sound makes us nervous."
A Bangladeshi construction worker in UAE

Flights scrapped, visa clock ticking

131 cancellations so far

SHAHEEN MOLLAH *and* MOHAMMAD JAMIL KHAN

Mohammad Obaidullah thought he was finally heading back to work in Dammam after two failed attempts. The 38-year-old, from Cumilla's Muradnagar, had boarded a Biman Bangladesh Airlines flight on February 28.

The plane remained airborne for two hours before returning to Dhaka around 7:00pm.

Early yesterday, he received a message asking passengers to return to Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport at 6:00am, as flight operations had resumed.

Obaidullah said he reached the airport around 3:00am, completed boarding, got on the aircraft and even had breakfast.

"But around 7:00am, an announcement came that the flight had been cancelled again and passengers would be informed later about the next steps.... Two days -- and even after boarding, we still cannot go," he said, adding

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Yunus gets VVIP status for a year

Interim govt issued gazette 2 days before Feb 12 polls

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Prior to the national election on February 12, the interim government declared the then chief adviser Dr Muhammad Yunus as a "Very Very Important Person" (VVIP) for a period of one year starting from the date of the transfer of responsibilities.

The gazette was issued on February 10, 2026 -- two days before the 13th national election.

The Chief Adviser's Office issued the gazette, signed by the then CA office secretary Md Saifullah Panna. Panna is currently attached to the public administration ministry.

Panna confirmed signing the document to Prothom Alo yesterday.

As a result of this designation, Yunus will remain under

SEE PAGE 8 COL 4

Fuel stocks adequate for short term

Crisis knocking if war prolongs

MOHAMMAD SUMAN *and* ASIFUR RAHMAN

While a prolonged conflict in the Middle East could disrupt fuel flows, Bangladesh's energy supply remains stable for now, with officials saying imports and distribution are continuing without interruption.

According to the officials, the country's fuel stock ranges between two weeks and one month, while the gas supply will remain stable for the next 20 days at least. LPG is being collected from alternative sources outside the Middle East.

If the conflict ends within the next couple of weeks, the country's energy supply would not be impacted much.

At present, the country has 201,610 tonnes of diesel in stock, enough to meet demand for about 14 days, according to data from the Bangladesh Petroleum Corporation (BPC).

Petrol and octane stocks stand at 21,705 tonnes and 34,133 tonnes respectively, enough for roughly 17 and 31 days.

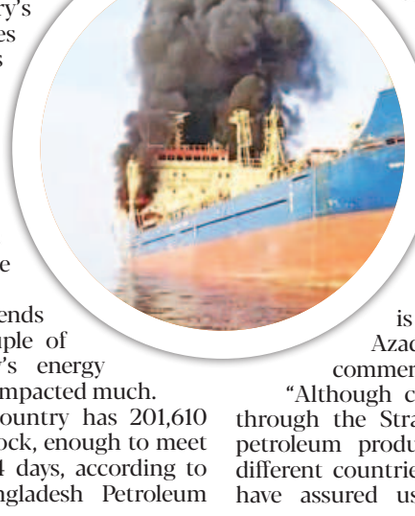
Besides, BPC's fuel imports until June are coming from Malaysia, China, Singapore and Indonesia, which are not related to the Strait of Hormuz, the area impacted by war, The Daily Star has learnt from BPC officials involved with the proceedings.

But there are uncertainties regarding crude oil import, which the country sources mainly from Saudi Arabia and the UAE.

The fuel supply situation is being closely monitored and contingency planning is underway, said AKM Azadur Rahman, BPC's commercial director.

"Although crude oil mainly comes through the Strait of Hormuz, refined petroleum products are sourced from different countries. Refined oil suppliers have assured us that shipments will

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1



BNP offers deputy speaker post to the opposition

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The BNP has offered the post of deputy speaker to the opposition ahead of the first sitting of the newly elected parliament, Home Minister Salahuddin Ahmed said yesterday.

"We respect the July National Charter and want to begin implementing the political understanding reached through consensus. We have agreed that two deputy speaker posts will be created. One of them will be nominated or elected from the opposition. We are offering that now," he said while briefing reporters after meeting with Prime Minister Tarique Rahman at the Secretariat.

Salahuddin said the offer was made as a gesture of goodwill in line with the July charter.

Asked about a reported petition seeking to bar the president from delivering the inaugural address on the first day of the session, he said he had no knowledge of such a petition.

"We have said that for freedom of speech and liberty, we have given our lives. People can speak," he added.

However, Salahuddin said the

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RUSSIA-UKRAINE WAR

Over 100 Bangladeshis sent to the front, 34 dead: report

MOHAMMAD JAMIL KHAN

More than 100 Bangladeshis have been recruited into Russia's war against Ukraine, and dozens have been killed on the front lines, according to rights groups that say many of the men were misled, exploited, or financially trapped before ending up in combat.

In an exclusive interview with The Daily Star, John Quinley, director of Bangkok-based Fortify Rights, and Oksana Pokalchuk, co-executive director of Ukraine-based Truth Hounds, disclosed the findings of a joint report to be launched today.

The report is based on interviews with 24 people in Bangladesh and Ukraine, including survivors, families of the deceased, and prisoners of war from Sri Lanka and Nepal.

According to the findings, at least 104 Bangladeshis were identified as having been recruited, with at least 34 dead based on Ukrainian information. Researchers, however, said the real toll could be higher and referred to "dozens" killed.

FAMILIES AWAIT

Several relatives told the researchers they have been lobbying Bangladesh's foreign ministry to bring back the bodies of their loved ones. Many have yet to receive them.

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PHOTO: COURTESY OF FAMILY

Akram Hossain, of Hosenpur village in Brahmanbaria's Ashuganj, was killed in a drone attack in Ukraine on April 14, 2025, the Bangla New Year.

Two killed in Sirajganj AL-BNP clash over fish farming

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Pabna*

At least two people were killed and 10 others injured yesterday in a clash between local BNP and Awami League groups over controlling a government-owned pond in Sirajganj's Raiganj upazila, said police.

The victims are Md Ismail Hossain, 70, of Kanadighi village, and Md Abdus Salam, 55, of Nakati village, said police.

Shamsul Alam, former president of Raiganj upazila unit BNP, confirmed that the two deceased were supporters of BNP.

Saiful Islam Khan, additional superintendent of Sirajganj police, said there has been a longstanding rivalry between the supporters of local BNP leader Abu Bakkar Siddique and AL leader Asmat Ali over fish farming in a khas (government-owned) pond in Goyalpara village.

Witnesses said the clash broke out in the afternoon when one group

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(From left, clockwise) Smoke rises following a missile strike in Tehran; a burning aircraft falls from the sky in Al Jahra, Kuwait; smoke billows from Saudi Aramco's Ras Tanura oil refinery after a reported Iranian drone strike; people take shelter in a train station during an ongoing rocket attack from Iran in Tel Aviv, Israel; a security personnel attempts to disperse a protester in India's Srinagar after curbs were imposed amid protests over the killing of Ayatollah Ali Khamenei. Photos were taken yesterday and late Sunday.

PHOTO: **AFP, REUTERS**

Found with throat slit, 7yr-old girl fights for life

Case filed against unidentified individuals

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, *Chattogram*

A seven-year-old girl is fighting for her life at Chattogram Medical College Hospital after unidentified miscreants allegedly kidnapped her and slit her throat at Sitakunda Eco Park on Sunday.

The child was rescued in critical condition from a remote hill within the park, nearly 8km from her home. Local workers found her severely injured and rushed her to hospital.

Her father said she had left home around 9:30am on Sunday to visit her grandmother at her uncle's house -- a commute she made almost daily.

Speaking to The Daily Star, he said, "We weren't worried because the distance is barely half a km. We realised something was wrong when my brother saw a picture of her on social media around 3:00pm."

Family members believe she was

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War escalates

FROM PAGE 1

"During active combat -- that included attacks from Iranian aircraft, ballistic missiles, and drones -- the US Air Force fighter jets were mistakenly shot down by Kuwaiti air defences," CENTCOM said.

US President Donald Trump yesterday told CNN that the "big wave" is yet to come in the war with Iran, adding that Washington did not know who the country's new leader would be following the killing of Khamenei.

"We haven't even started hitting them hard. The big wave hasn't even happened. The big one is coming soon," Trump said, telling CNN it was unclear who was now leading the country.

He also claimed 49 Iranian leaders were killed in initial strikes.

Reuters reported on Sunday that many senior US officials remain skeptical the military operation against the Islamic Republic will lead to regime change in the near term.

In an interview with the New York Post, Trump said he would not rule out sending ground troops into Iran if necessary.

"I don't have the yips with respect to boots on the ground -- like every president says, 'There will be no boots on the ground.' I don't say it," Trump told the Post.

"I say 'probably don't need them,' [or] 'if they were necessary,'" he said.

The US president also sought to counter criticism that his war on Iran lacked a clear purpose, listing four explicit goals.

"First, we're destroying Iran's missile capabilities... Second, we're annihilating their navy... Third, we're ensuring that the world's number-one sponsor of terror can never obtain a nuclear weapon.

"Finally, we are ensuring the Iranian regime can't continue to arm, fund and direct terrorist armies outside of their borders," he said.

"We're already substantially ahead of our time projections," Trump said at the White House on a possible timeframe of the operations, adding: "From the beginning, we projected four to five weeks, but we have capability to go far longer than that. We'll do it."

Defence Secretary Pete Hegseth told reporters that no US troops were yet on the ground in Iran, but added: "We'll go as far as we need to go."

However, he played down concerns that the US attack on Iran risked plunging the US into a new, open-ended conflict in the Middle East, even as officials declined to offer a timeline and cautioned that they expected more US casualties.

The United States and Israel launched their most ambitious attacks on Iran in decades on Saturday, killing Khamenei, sinking Iranian warships and hitting more than 1,000 targets so far.

"To the media outlets and political left screaming 'ENDLESS WARS' - stop. This is not Iraq. This is not endless," said Hegseth, a former Fox News host and Army veteran who served in Iraq from 2005 to 2006 and deployed to Afghanistan in 2012.

Ali Larijani, the powerful head of Iran's Supreme National Security Council, voiced defiance, vowing that Iran would defend itself "regardless of the costs and will make the enemies sorry for their miscalculation". He also ruled out any negotiations with the US.

"Iran, unlike the United States, has prepared itself for a long war," said Larijani in a post on X.

A total of 555 people have been killed across Iran in the conflict so far, the Iranian Red Crescent said yesterday.

"Following the Zionist-American terrorist attacks carried out in various regions of our country, 131 cities have been affected to date and, regrettably, 555 of our compatriots have been killed," the humanitarian group said in a post on Telegram.

Four US service personnel were reported to have died, and Trump urged Americans to grieve their loss. But the campaign could pose a major political risk for the Republican Party in this year's midterm elections, with only one in four Americans supporting the operation, according to a Reuters/Ipsos poll over the weekend.

The attack on Iran has pitched the Gulf into war, thrown global air transport into chaos and shut down shipping through the Strait of Hormuz, where a fifth of the world's oil trade skirts the Iranian coast, sending oil prices surging.

Qatar, one of the world's biggest exporters of liquefied natural gas, halted production, with no prospect of being able to ship safely through the chokepoint of the Strait of Hormuz.

Saudi Arabia shut its biggest refinery after drone strikes caused a fire there, one of a number of energy installations that became targets.

Meanwhile, an Iranian drone hit the runway of a UK air force base in Akrotiri in Cyprus, whose government announced that the major airport in its town of Paphos and the area around the British facility would be evacuated.

A Cypriot government spokesman said two more drones targeting the base were "dealt with in a timely manner", and Greece announced it was deploying frigates and jets to help protect Cyprus, a fellow EU member.

In Lebanon, the strikes have triggered a new round of violence between Israel and Hezbollah, with the Iran-backed group firing rockets and its enemy responding with bombing.

"We will end this campaign with not just Iran being struck but with Hezbollah suffering a devastating blow," Israel's army chief Eyal Zamir said.

As Lebanon, which had vowed to disarm Hezbollah, was dragged into the war, Prime Minister Nawaf Salam announced "the immediate ban of all Hezbollah security and military activities", deeming them "illegal".

Explosions rocked Beirut, while in southern Lebanon residents fled, according to AFP journalists, after the Israeli military announced it was striking several parts of the country.

The Israeli military said it had struck a senior Hezbollah operative in Beirut, while Lebanese authorities said Israeli strikes killed at least 52 people and wounded 154.

As the war escalated, calls for de-escalation also grew.

Russian President Vladimir Putin yesterday urged a ceasefire in the Middle East during phone calls with the leaders of several Gulf states. Putin held calls with Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman as well as with the leaders of the UAE, Qatar and Bahrain.

Meanwhile, China's Foreign Minister Wang Yi told his Iranian counterpart on a call that Beijing supports Tehran defending itself against US-Israeli strikes.

China had "urged the US and Israel to immediately cease military operations, avoid further escalation of tensions and prevent the conflict from spreading to the entire Middle East region", Wang said, according to CCTV.

In a separate phone call with Oman's foreign minister, Wang accused the United States and Israel of "violating the purposes and principles of the UN charter" by "deliberately instigating a war against Iran".

Turkey joined Russia and China in condemning the operation, which President Tayyip Erdogan called a "clear violation" of international law.

Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi yesterday said he had spoken with his Israeli counterpart and urged an "early" end to the conflict after strikes on Iran.

In the Strait of Hormuz, a waterway that is key to global oil transit, three ships were attacked on Sunday after Iran had previously warned vessels against crossing.

Trump and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu have urged Iranians to overthrow the government in Tehran, the sworn foe of Israel and the United States since the 1979 Islamic revolution toppled the pro-Western shah.

Over 100 Bangladeshis sent

FROM PAGE 1

"They want to bury their sons properly," Quinley said. "They are still waiting."

The report documents a pattern of recruitment that begins not with ideology, but with desperation.

Many of the men paid brokers between $1,000 and $5,000 per person, believing they were securing overseas jobs. Some thought they would work in factories in Europe. Others believed they would take up non-combat roles linked to the military.

Instead, several were routed through countries such as Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates before being taken to Russia.

CONTRACTS IN RUSSIAN

According to the researchers, the men could not read the documents written completely in the Russian language, were not provided translators or legal assistance, and signed without fully understanding they were enlisting in a war.

"They were not given informed consent," Quinley said.

One Bangladeshi man told researchers he had signed up, hoping to send money home to his impoverished family. He believed he would serve in a support role. After arrival, he was deployed to occupied Ukraine and sent to the front lines.

When he pleaded to return home, he was beaten by commanders after disagreements, the report says.

Fortify Rights later interviewed him after he managed to return to Bangladesh. He said others with him could not return.

FINANCIAL EXPLOITATION

The financial promises also often collapsed. Recruits were told they could earn around $2,000 per month, according to the findings.

In many cases, however, they were paid less than promised or not paid at all. Some were forced to use whatever money they earned inside Russia and were unable to send funds back home.

"In many situations, people paid for a job opportunity," Pokalchuk said. "But they found themselves on the battlefield with the risk of being injured or killed."

Truth Hounds said similar patterns have been documented in Nepal, Sri Lanka, and India, with foreign nationals now among prisoners of war in Ukraine.

Bangladeshi anti-trafficking police told the researchers that coercive practices had been used by recruitment agencies. This contrasts with earlier claims by some Bangladeshi authorities that those who travelled to Russia did so of their own will.

The report does not name specific brokers or map the full network but concludes that organised recruitment and smuggling operations were involved. Russian authorities, the researchers said, are also implicated because recruits formally signed military documents upon arrival.

So far in 2026, the groups say they have not documented new confirmed cases of recruitment. They noted that Bangladeshi authorities have strengthened monitoring at entry and exit points but cautioned that trafficking networks could adapt.

The report urges the Bangladeshi government to crack down on recruitment agencies, strengthen anti-trafficking coordination between police and civil society, and provide better support for survivors returning home.

It also calls on the government to press more forcefully for the return of bodies and to take a clearer stance on Russia's war.

For families in Bangladesh, the issue is less about geopolitics and more about loss.

Young men who left to earn a living have come back injured or traumatised -- if they returned at all. Some families borrowed heavily to pay brokers. In several cases, they lost both their savings and their sons.

"What we see is the exploitation of poverty," Quinley said. "Without stronger action, more Bangladeshis could be drawn into similar schemes."

The war is being fought thousands of miles away. But for some households in Bangladesh, its consequences are now painfully close to home.

NUMBERS COULD BE HIGHER

Regarding the aforesaid reports of 34 deaths of Bangladeshis in the frontline, Shariful Hasan, associate director of BRAC's Migration Programme and Youth Platform, said the number cited in the report is likely a minimum estimate and that the actual figure could be significantly higher.

"Our concern is much greater," he said. "Based on our observations, this number is at least the minimum. We believe more Bangladeshis have gone than what has been identified so far."

"Especially from a few areas of Bangladesh -- Noakhali, Lakshmipur and Mymensingh -- the number of people who went seems substantial. Our concern is that the figure may be close to a thousand or even exceed a thousand," Shariful told The Daily Star yesterday.

He added that BRAC had received multiple requests from families seeking assistance to bring back the bodies of those killed.

"It is true that we have submitted requests in several cases to bring back dead bodies at the request of families," he said. "But the bodies have not been returned."

Shariful said the realities of a large and active war zone make repatriation extremely difficult.

"In such a large battlefield, it is often not possible to retrieve bodies. The situation makes it practically impossible in many cases," he said.

Citing what BRAC has learned, he said many Bangladeshis — along with some African nationals — were reportedly placed on the front lines and used in highly vulnerable positions.

"We have come to know that some Bangladeshis and Africans were kept at the very front and used effectively as shields," he said. "They had no knowledge of warfare, no training, yet were placed in front-line combat positions. That is why the number of deaths appears to be high."

"It is unfortunate that the government did not appear to take sufficient initiative to raise awareness or act proactively on this issue," Shariful added.

'Regime change unlikely in Iran'

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No officials consulted by Reuters completely ruled out the possibility of the fall of Iran's government, which currently is buffeted by key personnel losses from ongoing US and Israeli air strikes and is deeply unpopular following a January round of extraordinarily violent repression.

But it is far from likely or even probable in the near term, they said.

Reuters reported earlier that Central Intelligence Agency assessments presented to the White House in the weeks before the Iran attack concluded that if Khamenei was killed, he could be replaced by hard-line figures from the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps or equally hard-line clerics, two sources said.

One US official with knowledge of internal White House deliberations said IRGC officials are unlikely to voluntarily capitulate in part because they have benefited from a vast patronage network designed to maintain internal loyalty.

The CIA assessments followed at least one report from a separate US intelligence agency which noted that there had been no IRGC defections during a massive round of anti-government protests in January that was met with brutal force by Iranian security forces.

Such defections would likely be a precondition of any successful revolution, according to three additional sources. Those sources requested that the specific intelligence agency not be named.

All of the sources Reuters spoke with for this story requested anonymity to discuss intelligence assessments.

The US intelligence discussions about the implications of a possible Khamenei killing have not been limited to whether it might lead to a change in government leadership.

Two of the US officials said that, since January, there has been significant debate -- but no consensus -- among officials of various agencies about the extent to which Khamenei's killing would lead to a significant shift in the way Iran approached negotiations with the US regarding its nuclear program.

US officials have also debated the extent to which Khamenei's death or ouster would deter the country from rebuilding its missile or nuclear facilities and capacities, said those officials.

Senior US officials have also become increasingly pessimistic that any opposition figure backed by Washington would realistically be able to control the country, those officials added.

Fuel stocks adequate

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continue," he said.

Bangladesh depends on imports for nearly all of its refined petroleum products, while crude oil makes up about a fifth of the total supply, processed domestically at the refinery.

As much as 65 percent of the country's piped gas supply needs are met from the local fields, with the remainder met through imports.

Of the LNG import, the country mostly depends on the government-to-government deals with Qatar (65 percent), which requires it to use the Strait of Hormuz.

Nine liquefied natural gas (LNG) cargoes are scheduled to arrive this month, with six coming from Qatar, said Petrobangla officials.

Four have already crossed the Strait, said Petrobangla Chairman Mohammad Erfanul Haque yesterday.

"So there is no risk regarding those cargoes," he said, adding that the authorities are also in touch with alternative suppliers in case of any disruption.

Meanwhile, the country's reliance on Middle Eastern LPG has fallen sharply.

While 76 percent of the LPG imports passed through the Strait of Hormuz in fiscal 2024-25, that share has dropped to 25 percent in the first two months this year.

At present, 62 percent of LPG imports are being sourced from the US.

The reduced dependence on the Middle East lowers the immediate risk of disruption in the LPG sector, said Md Rokonujjaman, head of sales at Omera Petroleum.

"Imports have increased slightly compared to previous months, and a major portion now comes from the US. However, if the Middle East crisis becomes prolonged, Bangladesh will face pressure. Greater reliance on alternative sources could drive up prices and intensify supply risks," he told The Daily Star.

Iran's indication that it has no immediate plan to close the Strait of Hormuz is a positive signal for import-dependent countries like Bangladesh.

In the BPC's stock, furnace oil remains at 78,278 tonnes, which is required in power plants and industries.

As per the BPC's calculation, the stock is enough to meet two months' demand.

Most of the power plants import their oil by themselves and they were supposed to complete their preparation for summer, officials said.

"We don't have exact data but there may not be any problem in this regard," said a BPC official.

BNP offers deputy speaker post

FROM PAGE 1

constitution, established practice and tradition still require the president to deliver the address on the first day of the first session of a new parliament and at the beginning of the parliamentary year.

If any future constitutional amendment changes the provision, it could be considered then.

On constitutional reform, Salahuddin said members who have taken oath as lawmakers would join the House as MPs, and only they would be entitled to participate in its proceedings.

"There is no provision in the constitution for a Constitutional Reform Council," he said.

"Those who have taken oath as members of such a council have done so on their own. But they cannot participate in the national parliament in that capacity. Only members of parliament can take part."

He said discussions on constitutional reform in seminars and public forums were part of political rights and anyone could raise demands.

"But we cannot place anything unconstitutional in the national parliament."

"If a constitutional amendment is brought and incorporated into the constitution, then all aspects must be specified -- who will take oath as members, who will administer the oath and in what form," Salahuddin said.

"These are long processes and matters for discussion."

Salahuddin said he learnt that a petition was moved before the High Court challenging the Constitutional Reform Order 2025, claiming it violated the constitution and was "ultra vires".

"Let us see what opinion comes from the judiciary. We can take that into discussion in parliament. All such matters will be considered lawfully and constitutionally through parliamentary debate. That is a democratic practice," he said.

On ordinances promulgated during the interim government, Salahuddin said all 133 ordinances were constitutionally required to be placed in parliament on the first day of the session.

"They will be placed. Which ones will be accepted and which ones will not -- that will be decided through parliamentary discussion," he added.

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PM reaffirms women-only bus service in Dhaka

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Prime Minister Tarique Rahman has reaffirmed the government's commitment to launching a dedicated bus service for women in Dhaka within 180 days of assuming power, as part of its election pledges.

The PM met with Prof Dr M Shamsul Hoque of the Civil Engineering Department at Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology yesterday morning to seek advice to this end, the prime minister's press wing said.

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Hands marked with serial numbers, these women wait in line to buy essentials from a TCB truck at subsidised prices in the Ring Road area of the capital. TCB employees wrote the numbers on their hands to maintain order in the queue. *Inset*, people began assembling around 8:00am and waited until 12:00pm, when the truck arrived, hoping to secure a Tk 590 packet containing lentils, sugar, chickpeas, soyabean oil and dates. Only 400 such packets were available.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

HC order on July charter, referendum petitions today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday set today for delivering orders on two petitions challenging the legality of the Referendum Ordinance and July National Charter.

The bench of Justice Razik-Al-Jalil and Justice Md Anowarul Islam set the date after hearing arguments from the lawyers concerned on the petitions.

Lawyers Ahsanul Karim, Syed Mamun Mahbub, Jyotirmoy Barua, Gazi Kamrul Islam Sajal, Gazi Touhidul Islam and Md Nazmus Sakib placed arguments in support of the writ petitions while lawyers Mohammod Hossain Lipu and Mohammad Shishir Manir opposed the petitions on behalf of National Citizen Party and Jamaat-e-Islami respectively and Acting Attorney General Md Arshadur Rouf and Additional Attorney General

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'Challenging July charter in court deeply concerning'

Says Jamaat

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Jamaat-e-Islami has expressed deep concern over a petition filed with the High Court challenging the process of passing the July Charter reform proposal in parliament.

Speaking at an emergency press conference at the party's central office in Moghbazar around 10:00pm yesterday, Jamaat Assistant Secretary General Ahsanul Mahboob Zubair said attempts to achieve political objectives by "leaning on the court's shoulders" had created crises in the past.

"The nation does not want to witness any such disaster again," he said.

Zubair said after the July uprising, the interim government set three priorities: reforms, justice

SEE PAGE 4 COL 1

INTERNATIONAL CRIMES TRIBUNAL

'It felt like I was inside a grave'

Disappearance victim narrates harrowing details at ICT-1

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Iqbal Chowdhury, a victim of enforced disappearance, yesterday described the trauma and despair he endured while allegedly being held in a cell of the Directorate General of Forces Intelligence.

"I was terrified... I kept crying. I kept praying to Allah. It felt like I was inside a living grave," Iqbal, a former teacher turned businessman, told the International Crimes Tribunal-1 while narrating his ordeal.

He testified as the fourth prosecution witness in a crimes against humanity case against former prime minister Sheikh Hasina and 12 others over the secret detention and torture of at least 24 people at the JIC between 2016 and August 2024.

According to his testimony, he was targeted for his critical social media posts on the 2009 BDR massacre, the Shapla Chattar killings, former BNP chairperson Khaleda Zia's eviction from her residence, enforced disappearances and extrajudicial killings during the then Awami League government's tenure.

Iqbal said that on May 7, 2018, plainclothes men identifying themselves as law enforcers picked him up from his Mohammadpur residence without disclosing details. He was taken at gunpoint in a white microbus with black glass, blindfolded and handcuffed, and threatened with "crossfire" before being confined in a

SEE PAGE 9 COL 4

'Hanif warned I would not return alive'

Student leader Mahin tells ICT-2

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A student coordinator of the July uprising yesterday told the International Crimes Tribunal-2 that a senior Awami League leader had threatened his life, warning his family that he might not return alive if he refused to withdraw from the movement.

Testifying as the fifth prosecution witness in a crimes against humanity case against Awami League General Secretary Obaidul Quader and six others, Abu Sayed Bin Mahin Sarkar said AL Joint General Secretary Mahbubul Alam Hanif phoned his father on July 18, 2024, and issued the threat.

"Hanif told my father that if I did not step away from the movement, he might not get me back alive," Mahin testified.

SEE PAGE 9 COL 4

Sworn in, still missing from govt portals

Profiles of ministers, state ministers yet to appear on most ministry websites

WASIM BIN HABIB *and* BAHARAM KHAN

Nearly two weeks after the new government was sworn in, most ministries have yet to upload the profiles of the newly appointed ministers and state ministers on their official websites, leaving citizens without basic information about policymakers.

A review of 43 ministry websites found that only nine had updated their sites with biographies and photographs of their leadership as of yesterday.

The remaining ministries display only the names and photos of their political heads, without any profile details.

Uploading these profiles is the responsibility of the respective ministries. Delays not only leave government portals incomplete but also limit citizens' access to essential information about their elected representatives.

The ministries that have updated their websites are: foreign affairs; power, energy and mineral resources; education; primary and mass education; local government, rural development and cooperatives; posts, telecommunications and ICT; science and technology; and liberation war affairs.

A 50-member cabinet led by Prime Minister Tarique Rahman, also chairman of the BNP, was sworn in on February 17, five days after his party's landslide victory in the 13th national parliamentary election.

- **Only 9 of 43 ministry websites updated with profiles**
- **Most sites show names, photos but no biographies**
- **Just 6 ministers, 3 state ministers have profiles online**
- **Several key ministries yet to publish any info**
- **Experts term the delay administrative negligence**

Portfolios were distributed among 25 ministers and 24 state ministers the following day.

Of the cabinet members, only six ministers currently have profiles available on their respective ministry websites. Three of them oversee two ministries each.

The number is lower for state

SEE PAGE 9 COL 3

BNP 'playing a dual game' over July charter: NCP

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

National Citizen Party spokesperson Asif Mahmud Shojib Bhuyain yesterday accused the BNP of "playing a dual game" by challenging the July Charter in court.

"No way should this parliament begin with the 'last remnant of fascism'. If it happens, all parliament members will have to answer," he said at a press briefing at the party's Banglamotor office in the capital.

Asif said the elections were held on the basis of the July Charter and warned that if the court strikes down the Charter, both Parliament and the government could face dissolution.

He also referred to a recent statement by Home Minister Salahuddin Ahmed, who said he had

SEE PAGE 9 COL 1

DU observes historic Flag Hoisting Day

DU CORRESPONDENT

The Flag Hoisting Day was observed at the Bot Tola premises adjacent to the Faculty of Fine Arts of Dhaka University yesterday.

On this day in 1971, the first Bangladesh flag was hoisted at DU, marking a significant step in the movement for independence.

On the occasion, students from the Departments of Music and Dance performed the national anthem, patriotic songs, and dances.

The programme was inaugurated by DU Vice-Chancellor Prof Niaz Ahmed Khan, who hoisted the national flag.

The event was presided over by Pro-VC (Administration) Prof Sayema Haque Bidisha, with Pro-VC (Academic) Prof Mamun Ahmed and Treasurer Prof M Jahangir Alam Chowdhury attending as special guests.

US assistant secy Paul Kapur arrives tonight

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

US Assistant Secretary of State for South and Central Asian Affairs S Paul Kapur is arriving in Dhaka tonight for a three-day visit in the second leg of his Asia tour after India to advance bilateral relations.

Kapur, who arrived in India on Sunday, is scheduled to hold meetings with several ministers, including Foreign Minister Dr Khalilur Rahman, as well as business leaders and politicians, diplomatic sources in Dhaka and Washington said.

This is the first high-level visit by a US official since the BNP government took office following the February 12 election, 18 months after the mass uprising in 2024.

The Biden administration had put pressure on the previous Awami League government by imposing sanctions on Rab in 2021 and announcing a visa policy in 2023 over

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4

Members of Bangladesh Mahila Parishad organised a protest rally in front of the Jatiya Press Club yesterday, demanding action and accountability over the increasing incidents of rape, murder and violence against women and girls across the country. They urged the government to take immediate steps to curb such acts of gender-based violence and ensure security and safety for women and children.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

Jahanara Arzu passes away

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Ekushey Padak-winning poet, literary editor and cultural personality Jahanara Arzu is no more.

She breathed her last around 1:30pm yesterday at her Gulshan residence in the capital. She was 94.

She left behind two sons, one daughter, grandchildren and a host of admirers to mourn her death.

Jahanara Arzu, mother of Justice Md Ashfaqul Islam, a senior judge of the Supreme Court, was widely respected for her contributions to Bangla literature and the country's cultural sphere.

Over the decades, she earned recognition as a distinguished poet and editor, playing an influential role in shaping literary discourse and nurturing cultural engagement, a Supreme Court press release said.

Challenging July

FROM PAGE 3

and an acceptable election.

He said the July National Charter was finalised after eight months of discussions by the consensus commission and was later approved by more than a two-thirds majority in a referendum.

According to him, there had been a consensus that the parliament would function both as a constituent assembly and a legislature. Although a dual oath was part of that understanding, BNP lawmakers did not take it, he added.

In this context, filing a writ with the High Court challenging the legality of the referendum and the July Charter amounts to pushing a political question into the court, Zubair said.

At the press conference, Supreme Court lawyer and Jamaat central working committee member Shishir Monir said one of the petitions sought a rule and stay order declaring the July Charter Implementation Order 2025 and the oath of the Constitutional Reform Assembly unconstitutional.

Another writ challenged Section 3 of the Referendum Ordinance, he said, adding that the referendum had already been completed and the results announced. "It is no longer about questioning the process; the outcome itself is being challenged," he said.

Monir said the filing of the writ just days before the start of the parliamentary session appeared politically motivated.

"It is clearly a political question. The court should not be made the subject of issues adopted through political consensus," he added.

Jamaat leaders also said decisions regarding the implementation of reform proposals should rest with elected MPs, and creating a political crisis by bringing the court into the matter was undesirable.

TARAKANDA OF MYMENSINGH

Rangsa river choked by silt, grabbers

AMINUL ISLAM, *Mymensingh*

The Rangsa river, a tributary of the Old Brahmaputra in Tarakanda upazila of Mymensingh, was once an important waterway for transporting goods to different destinations in the region.

The river flowed through Dadra, Kakni and Balikhan unions in the upazila before connecting with other rivers across Mymensingh Sadar.

Today, the river is all but lost to oblivion. It has been reduced to a shadow of its former self and is gradually being choked.

About 10 years ago, a regulator was constructed on the river at its confluence in Mymensingh Sadar. Over the years, this caused extensive siltation, significantly restricting the river's natural flow. Water hyacinths have further worsened the situation by taking over the entire waterbody.

To make matters worse, influential quarters have been grabbing parts of the river and constructing various structures amid negligence by local authorities.

"In Rangsa's halcyon days, people could easily transport jute and other goods, including agricultural produce, by boat during the monsoon. Now, with its natural flow severely restrained, the river's water has become stagnant and has been covered by water hyacinths and weeds for the past 10 years," said Azizul Islam, 73, of Kakni village.

Sarwar Hossain, a farmer from the same locality, said other small waterbodies connected to the river are also facing the same fate.

Locals alleged that influential quarters have been grabbing the river's land and creating obstructions to its flow for paddy cultivation and fish farming throughout the year, while authorities have turned a blind eye.

ATM Robilul Karim, a senior journalist, said if Rangsa could be saved, it would significantly enhance the region's agricultural productivity.

Advocate Shibbir Ahmed Liton, secretary of local environmental platform Poribesh Rokhha O Unnayan Andolon, urged the authorities concerned to evict the illegal grabbers, remove structures built on the river's land, clear the water hyacinths, and excavate the river to restore its natural flow.

SM Abid Hossain, sub-divisional engineer of Bangladesh Water Development Board in Mymensingh, said siltation at the confluence of the Rangsa and Old Brahmaputra rivers has disrupted the regular flow for a decade.

"There is also a regulator at that point in the Rambadhrapur area, but it is 4.50-metre wide whereas the river's width is more than 10 metres. As such, water cannot pass through during the monsoon," he said, adding that a proposal for dredging the Rangsa has been sent to higher authorities for approval.

Md Aminul Islam, UNO of Tarakanda and president of the upazila unit of Nodi Rokhha Committee, said several illegal structures had recently been removed from different parts of the river.

"Further steps will be taken soon against grabbers," the UNO said.

Speechwriter, four deputy press secys to PM appointed

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A speechwriter and four deputy press secretaries have been appointed to Prime Minister Tarique Rahman in the newly elected government.

The Ministry of Public Administration issued separate gazette notifications yesterday confirming the contractual appointments.

UNB Editor Mahfuzur Rahman has been appointed as the Prime Minister's Speech Writer (Grade-1) on a contract basis.

Ekattor TV Deputy Head of News Mostafa Julfikar Hasan, known as Shiplu, has been appointed as a Deputy Press Secretary.

According to the order, he has been given the

SEE PAGE 9 COL 8

Suspected robber beaten to death

UNB, *Rajshahi*

A suspected robber was allegedly beaten to death by locals at Chakpalashi village in Puthia upazila of Rajshahi early yesterday.

The deceased was identified as Shaheen Ali, 35, of Durgapur upazila, said Dulal Hossain, officer-in-charge of Puthia Police Station.

He said eight suspected robbers entered the village around 3:00am in a pickup van. Sensing their presence, locals raised the alarm and gathered by shouting.

At one stage, the eight tried to flee, but locals blocked the vehicle by placing logs on the road and caught them. Locals later beat them, leaving one dead on the spot and seven others injured, the OC said.

The injured were taken to a local hospital and later handed over to police, he added.

US assistant secy

FROM PAGE 3

democracy and human rights issues.

The Trump administration's focus is on trade and security, reflected in the reciprocal trade agreement signed on February 9, three days before the election, which analysts say favours the US.

They also pointed out that the agreement contains provisions involving Bangladesh's trade with non-market economies, which is problematic, although the tariff on Bangladesh's exports to the US has been reduced to 19 percent from 20 percent.

The US Supreme Court, however, cancelled the tariffs imposed by the President. Trump later announced a universal tariff of 15 percent.

Foreign ministry officials said there are many issues surrounding trade and tariffs that need clarification, and these will be discussed during Kapur's visit.

US Ambassador Brent Christensen, after arriving in Dhaka earlier this year, also spoke of his priorities on trade and regional security, particularly Chinese influence in South Asia.

The US has been seeking to sign two defence deals with Bangladesh -- GSOMIA and ACSA -- and this could be an important part of discussions during Kapur's visit, sources said.

A diplomatic source in Washington said the US wants speedy repatriation of around 5,000 undocumented Bangladeshis currently living there, as the Trump administration has stepped up its anti-immigration drive.

The source said in 2025, the US repatriated about 300 undocumented Bangladeshis and another 300 are currently eligible for repatriation. An estimated 4,000 others are believed to be living there with irregular status, with cases pending in court.

PM reaffirms women-only bus

FROM PAGE 3

During the meeting, the PM also sought advice on modernising the country's transport sector and improving overall connectivity in Dhaka.

In the meeting at the Prime Minister's Office, the possibility of introducing train services in parts of Old Dhaka and other low-lying areas of the capital -- where bus services are currently inadequate -- was also considered.

Press wing officials further said the introduction of electric vehicles was discussed as a cost-effective and environmentally friendly transport solution capable of serving a larger number of commuters.

Discussions were also held on the potential for high-speed train services in the future, aimed at enhancing intercity connectivity and easing traffic congestion.

UNIVERSITY OF DHAKA: Applications in prescribed form obtainable from the office of the Registrar are invited from the Bangladeshi nationals for filling up 01 (One) permanent post of Professor in the Institute of Disaster Management and Vulnerability Studies in the Pay Scale of Tk. 56,500-74,400/- (National pay Scale-2015).

QUALIFICATION: Candidates should be reputed scholars having high academic qualifications and must have a Ph.D. in Disaster Management. They must have at least 12 years of teaching experience in a university with at least 12 (twelve) research publications in the indexed/quality journal with DOI (Digital Object Identifier). Articles published in predatory journals will not be accepted. Relevant notes and conditions apply. (For details, see the Dhaka University website).

Application Guideline: Eleven copies of application together with attested copies of certificates, testimonials, mark-sheets and proof of experience along with a Pay Order/Bank Draft of the value of Tk. 1,000/- (One thousand) only, payable **to the Registrar, University of Dhaka**, should reach him on or before **11/05/2026**. Candidates already in service must apply through the proper channel.

GD-455

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Office of the Executive Engineer
PWD Division, Rangpur
Tel: 02589962357
E-mail: ee_rngpr@pwd.gov.bd

Memo No. 25.36.8500.110.00.000.00.1188 Date: 02/03/2026

Invitation for e-GP Tender

Sl No.	e-GP Tender ID & Reference No.	Name of work	Tender/proposal closing date and time
1	1236687, PWD/RNGPR/ Textile/Fund/ 25-26/01,	Prevention of damping of Physics, Chemistry Lab rooftop at Testing Building and repair works of broken floor tiles including reinstallation at Rangpur Textile Engineering College, Rangpur	12-Mar-2026 12:41

This is an online tender where only e-Tenders will be accepted in e-GP Portal and no offline and hard copy will be accepted. To submit e-Tender please register on in the National e-GP System Portal (http://www.eprocure.gov.bd) is required.
Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP System Portal (http://www.eprocure.gov.bd).

মোঃ সাকিউল আলম
পরিচিতি নং-২০২০০৮০১০০৪১
নির্বাহী প্রকৌশলী
গণপূর্ত বিভাগ, রংপুর
ee_rngpr@pwd.gov.bd

GD-458

Office of the Chief Engineer
University of Dhaka

Fax: 88-02-55167810
E-mail: vcoffice@du.ac.bd
registrar@du.ac.bd

Memo No. 5111(2)/Engg. Dated: 02/03/2026

Invitation for e-GP Tender Notice (LTM)

e-GP Tender is invited in the National e-GP System (www.eprocure.gov.bd) for the procurement of works mentioned below under University of Dhaka.

Sl No.	Tender ID	Package No.	Name of work	e-Tender last selling date & time	e-Tender closing date & time
1	1234355	DU/CZ-4/FINEARTS/55	Construction of road from library road to print making department balcony at Faculty of Fine Arts.	16-03-2026 17.00	17-03-2026 12.30

This is an online tender, where only e-Tender will be accepted in the National e-GP Portal and no office/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 branches of any registered bank branches. Further information and guidance are available in the National e-GP System Portal and from e-GP help desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd).

Pritom Datta
Executive Engineer, Zone-4
University of Dhaka

GD-466

জমি বিক্রয়

পূর্বাচল আমেরিকান সিটিতে এফ-১ ব্লকে ৪.৯৭ কাঠার একটি লেক ভিউ/কর্নার প্লট বিক্রি হবে। দাম আলোচনা সাপেক্ষ।
ফোন: ০১৮১৯২০০০০৮

LEGAL NOTICE

IN THE SUPREME COURT OF BANGLADESH
HIGH COURT DIVISION
(STATUTORY ORIGINAL JURISDICTION)
COMPANY MATTER NO. 192 OF 2026

IN THE MATTER OF : **Gazipur Fashion Ltd.** represented by Mr. Manjurul Karim, Managing Director. .....Petitioner
-VERSUS-
The Registrar of Joint Stock Companies and Firms and others .....Respondents

Notice is hereby given that an application under Sections 12 and 13 of the Companies Act, 1994 was filed before the High Court Division of the Hon'ble Supreme Court of Bangladesh for confirming the addition of sub-clause being No. "22A" in the clause No. III of the Memorandum of Association of the Company represented by the petitioner, passed on a Special Resolution by the shareholders on 05.02.2026. Furthermore, necessary direction was sought upon the Registrar of Joint Stock Companies and Firms to accept the addition of new sub-clause as being No. "22A" of the Memorandum of Association. Upon preliminary hearing, **Ms. Justice Kazi Zinat Hoque** was pleased to admit the same on 22.02.2026. Anyone desirous of opposing the said application may appear before the Hon'ble Court either personally or through an authorized learned Advocate on the date fixed. Copy of the application may be obtained from the under signed on payment of prescribed charges.

Mohammad Raisul Islam, Advocate, Supreme Court of Bangladesh
Room No. 1015 (Annex), Supreme Court Bar Association Building
Mobile No. +88-(0)1829739926 Email. mr.raisul@gmail.com

LEGAL NOTICE

IN THE SUPREME COURT OF BANGLADESH
HIGH COURT DIVISION
(STATUTORY ORIGINAL JURISDICTION)
COMPANY MATTER NO. 182 OF 2026

Memora Global Limited ----------**Petitioner**
-VERSUS-
The Registrar of Joint Stock Companies and Firms & other ----------**Respondents**

Notice is hereby given that an application under sections 12 read with Section 13 of the Companies Act 1994 has been filled for making certain changes to the Object Clause of the Memorandum of Association of **Memora Global Limited** and upon preliminary hearing on 22.02.2026, **Mr. Justice Kazi Zinat Hoque** was pleased to admit the said application. Anyone desirous of opposing the matter may appear before the Hon'ble court either personally or through his advocate on the date fixed. A copy of the application may be obtained from the undersigned on payment of necessary costs.

MD. HAFIZUR RAHAMAN KHAN, Barrister-at-Law
Advocate, Appellate Division, Supreme Court of Bangladesh,
Jamila Villa, Flat No. C-2, House-4/A/1 (3rd Floor), Road-02
Gulshan-1, Dhaka-1212, Bangladesh.

INVITATION FOR TENDER
ARMY AVIATION MAINTENANCE WORKSHOP
DHAKA CANTONMENT

1. Financial year 2025-2026 Sealed quotations are invited from bonafide reputed and enlisted (DGDP/Logistics Area) firms of Bangladesh Army who all are renewed (2025-26) of local Repair of following item in local currency:

Ser	Tender No & date	Aircraft Model	Description of Work	Qty	Last date of selling Tender Schedule	Opening date of Tender
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
1.	Paper Tender/LR/AC/02 Dt: 18 Jan 2026	MI-171 HELICOPTER Reg No: S3-BRM, Ser No: 7547	Overhauling of P/N:Kay-115AM Combination Hydraulic Control Actuator	01	According to PPR 2008 rule 61(4) Schedule will be sold up to 14 days from the date of publication at the newspaper.	Tender will be opened on the 15th days of publication of the newspaper.

2. The terms & conditions with technical specification are available at Tech store in Army Aviation Maintenance Workshop, Dhaka cantonment during office time. Two percent (2%) earnest money of the total tendered amount have to be deposited in the form of Bank draft/pay order along with the tender in favour of commandant, Army Aviation Maintenance Workshop, Dhaka cantonment, Dhaka. Interested firm has to purchase tender schedule from Technical Store of Army Aviation Maintenance workshop, upto 1400 hours in every working day till last date of selling as mentioned in columns 6 (14 days from the date of publication at the newspaper). On the opening date (mentioned in columns 7) at 1230 hours tender box will be opened in presence of intending bidders or their representatives (if any).

3. Participating firms must have past experience in doing the similar nature of work and experience certificate to be attached in tender.

4. If any repair/overhauling shows any malfunction in the current financial year the supplying firm will be bound to overhauling it again without demanding any financial support.

5. The package price offered by the firm participating in the current financial year, the supplying firm will be bound to overhauling it again without demanding any financial support.

6. Authority reserves all the right to accept or reject any or all the offers of the tender without assigning any reason there of.

আই এস পি আর/সেনা/২০৪

Commandant
Army Aviation Maintenance Workshop
Dhaka Cantonment

GD-452

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Office of the Project Director
Maintenance & Rehabilitation of Railway Track in Eastern Zone of Bangladesh Railway Project
Bangladesh Railway, CRB, Chattogram.
Mobile No. 01711-506101
E-mail: pd.trep@railway.gov.bd

2nd Corrigendum e-Tender Notice

Reference No. 54.01.1500.109.07.067.25-1022 dated: 02.03.2026

The following e-Tenders have been invited in the National e-GP Portal System (http://eprocure.gov.bd) for the procurement of Goods:

Sl. No.	Tender Refence No.	Tender ID No.	Procurement Nature and Name	Tender Method	Field Name	Old Value	New Value
1.	E-Tender/GD-1/ 2025-2026	1191055	Goods: Procurement of Rails	OTM (ICT)	Document last selling date & time	03-March-2026 at 17:00 Hrs.	15-March-2026 at 17:00 Hrs.
					Opening Date & Time	04-March-2026 at 12:30 Hrs.	16-March-2026 at 12:30 Hrs.
					Closing Date & Time	04-March-2026 at 12:30 Hrs.	16-March-2026 at 12:30 Hrs.
					Last date & time for Tender/Proposal Security Submission	04-March-2026 at 11:00 Hrs.	16-March-2026 at 11:00 Hrs.
2.	E-Tender/GD-2/ 2025-2026	1200707	Goods: Procurement of Sleepers & Fittings	OTM (ICT)	Document last selling date & time	03-March-2026 at 17:00 Hrs.	15-March-2026 at 17:00 Hrs.
					Opening Date & Time	04-March-2026 at 12:30 Hrs.	16-March-2026 at 12:30 Hrs.
					Closing Date & Time	04-March-2026 at 12:30 Hrs.	16-March-2026 at 12:30 Hrs.
					Last date & time for Tender/Proposal Security Submission	04-March-2026 at 11:30 Hrs.	16-March-2026 at 11:30 Hrs.

N.B.: All other terms & conditions will remain unchanged.

এস (২৬)(১৯৯)

02/03/2026
(Md. Tanvirul Islam)
Project Director

GD-468

Conflict could last 4 weeks

Says Trump, sees three 'good choices' to lead Iran

AGENCIES

US President Donald Trump suggested the conflict with Iran could go on for the next four weeks, the Daily Mail newspaper reported on Sunday.

"It's always been a four-week process. We figured it will be four weeks or so. It's always been about a four-week process so - as strong as it is, it's a big country, it'll take four weeks - or less," the British newspaper quoted Trump as saying.

Trump told the newspaper he remained open to more talks with the Iranians.

Trump also told The New York Times that he had "three very good choices" for who could lead Iran, but he did not name them. "I won't be revealing them now. Let's get the job done first," he said. A Reuters/Ipsos poll that concluded on Sunday showed 27 percent of Americans approved of the strikes.

15 US aircraft leave Spain

Madrid says bases cannot be used for Iran attacks

REUTERS, *Madrid*

Fifteen US aircraft have left the Rota and Moron military bases in southern Spain since the US and Israel launched weekend attacks on Iran, maps by flight tracking website FlightRadar24 showed yesterday.

Foreign Minister Jose Manuel Albares said Spain would not allow its military bases to be used for attacks on Iran, which Spain has condemned.

Seven of the aircraft were shown on FlightRadar24 as having landed at Ramstein Air Base in Germany.

Britain had also initially refused to allow the use of its bases for an attack on Iran, but on Sunday Prime Minister Keir Starmer authorised their use for "collective self-defence".

Spain's condemnation of the US-Israeli actions in Iran by Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez once again make it an outlier in the region, potentially straining its relationship with Washington further.

US allies in Gulf bear brunt of attacks

AGENCIES

Loud explosions were heard across Gulf cities yesterday as Tehran carried out strikes against countries in the region that host US bases for the third day in response to US-Israeli air raids.

AFP reporters and witnesses said they heard several loud blasts in Abu Dhabi, Dubai, Doha, Manama and Kuwait City.

Iran's continued and unprecedented bombardment of the Gulf has rattled a region long seen as a haven of peace and security in the turbulent Middle East.

Bahrain's interior ministry said Iranian strikes killed one person, the island nation's first fatality since the start of Tehran's campaign, bringing the total number of deaths across the Gulf to five since Saturday.

Falling debris from an intercepted missile sparked a fire on a foreign ship in the port city of Salman, the Bahraini ministry said, killing one worker and seriously injuring two others.

Since Saturday, across the Gulf, civilian infrastructure has been hit, from airports and seaports to residential buildings and hotels.

As of Sunday afternoon, the United Arab Emirates (UAE) defence ministry said it had so far "dealt with" 165 incoming ballistic missiles, two cruise missiles and 541 Iranian drones.

In Bahrain, a friend alerted me on Sunday morning that the airport was under attack after having a sleepless night.

"Woken by huge bangs and wailing siren," he texted. "I think maybe around 20 booms and bangs. At least two hits".

These are not familiar scenes in this region, but since this conflict began on Saturday morning, Iran appears to have expanded its target set from just hitting military targets, like the US Navy's 5th Fleet headquarters in Bahrain, to airports and other civilian sites.

Now luxury hotels and shopping malls, high-rise apartment blocks, state-of-the-art airport departure terminals are getting sporadically hit as gaps appear in the Arab states' air defences in the Gulf.

These places were never built with the prospect in mind that they would one day come under attack from drones and ballistic missiles.

Iran's Foreign Minister, Abbas Aragchi, has denied targeting his country's neighbours, telling Al Jazeera: "We are not attacking our neighbours in the Persian Gulf countries, we are targeting the presence of the US in these countries. Neighbours should direct their grievances to the decision-makers of this war".

Some of the damage to civilian infrastructure in the Gulf states is accidental - resulting from debris falling from intercepted missiles. But not all.

The number of attacks on airports in Bahrain and the UAE point to more than coincidence. Iran always made it clear in advance that, if it was attacked, it would retaliate at any country it considered to be complicit in that attack, reports BBC.

Birds fly as smoke rises following an explosion after US and Israeli strikes on Iran, amid escalating tensions, in Tehran yesterday. *Top,* the destroyed state TV communications tower next to Gandi Hospital in Tehran.

PHOTO: REUTERS, AFP

'We have to run fast'

Filipino workers on life under fire in Middle East

AFP, *Manila*

Filipina caregiver Charlot David made the run back and forth to the bomb shelter several times before deciding it was better to simply stay there.

The 44-year-old mother of four, who has lived through "several wars" since moving to Israel in 2008, knew exactly what to do when the ear-splitting alert on her mobile phone first woke her on Saturday.

US uses Anthropic AI, B-2 bombers, suicide drones

REUTERS

The United States unleashed an array of weaponry against Iranian targets on Saturday, including Tomahawk cruise missiles, stealth fighters, and for the first time in combat, low-cost one-way attack drones modeled after Iranian designs.

US Central Command released photographs showing Tomahawk missiles, F-18 and F-35 fighter jets alongside details of the strikes on Iran as part of Operation Epic Fury.

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (AI)

The Pentagon used artificial intelligence services from Anthropic, including its Claude tools, during its attack on Iran, according to a source familiar with the situation. Reuters could not determine how the tools were used in the war effort.

Anthropic's AI has been in use across the intelligence community and armed services, and it was first among peer AI companies to work with classified information, through a supply deal via cloud provider Amazon.

BOMBERS

As the Pentagon intensified its bombings of Iran's military, it deployed B-2 stealth bombers from the US to strike at hardened, underground Iranian missile facilities with 2,000-pound bombs. The B-2, a $2-billion flying wing built by Northrop Grumman, played a key role in delivering strikes on Iran's nuclear sites last June.

DRONES

The US military said it used suicide drones that appear identical, based on photos released by the Pentagon, to the new LUCAS (Low-Cost Unmanned Combat Attack System) manufactured by Phoenix, Arizona-based Spektreworks. The company did not respond to requests for comment. In a first, CENTCOM used one-way attack drones modeled after Iran's Shahed drones, the Pentagon said. Kamikaze drones are inexpensive and are meant to be produced by several manufacturers, the Pentagon has said. The price of the LUCAS is around $35,000. The US also used much more expensive MQ-9 Reaper drones and counter-drone systems.

TOMAHAWKS

The Tomahawk Land Attack Missile is a long-range cruise missile typically launched from sea to attack targets in deep-strike missions. The precision-guided Tomahawk cruise missile can strike targets from 1,000 miles (1,600 km) away, even in heavily defended airspace. The missile measures 20 feet (6.1 meters) long with an 8.5-foot wingspan and weighs about 3,330 pounds (1,510 kg).

According to Pentagon budget data, the US plans to buy 57 such missiles in 2026. They have an average cost of $1.3 million each. There is also an ongoing effort to spend millions to modify and upgrade the weapons including the guidance systems.

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
District Primary Education Office
Bhola
http://dpe.bhola.gov.bd

Memo No. 38.01.0900.001.00.000.2026/219 Date: 26.02.2026

e-Tender Notice No. 01/2025-26

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

Sl No.	Name of Scheme and Package No.	Tender/ Proposal ID	Tender/ Proposal publication date & time	Tender/ Proposal document last selling/ downloading date & time	Tender/ Proposal closing date & time	Procurement method
1	Goods: Furniture supply of 181 set high-low benches, 50 chairs, 57 tables and 11 rakes for selected 24 gps of different upazila of Bhola district under Fourth Primary Education Development Program (PEDP 4) (Package No. GD 808.58)	1235579	3/3/2026 14.00	15/3/2026 17:00	16/3/2026 14:00	OTM

This is online tender, where only e-Tender will be accepted in the National e-GP Portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted. To submit e-Tender, registration in the National e-GP System Portal (http://www.eprocure.gov.bd) is required. The fees for downloading the e-Tender/Proposal document from the National e-GP Portal have to be deposited online through any registered bank's branch. Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP System Portal and from e-GP help desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd).

Aminul Islam
District Primary Education Officer
Bhola
Email: dpeobhola@gmail.com

GD-470

TEXAS SHOOTING

Gunman expressed 'pro-Iranian regime sentiment': SITE

AFP, *Houston*

The gunman who killed two people and wounded 14 overnight in Austin, the capital of the US state of Texas, had expressed "pro-Iranian regime sentiment" on social media, the SITE Intelligence Group said Sunday.

The organization, which monitors jihadist groups, identified the assailant, who was shot dead by police, as Ndiaga Diagne, a US citizen of Senegalese origin. Austin police confirmed that identification Sunday evening.

Representative Chip Roy, a Republican member of the US House of Representatives, published a picture on X of the purported gunman showing him holding a rifle and wearing a sweatshirt that says "Property of Allah."

SITE said Diagne had expressed "pro-Iranian regime sentiment and hatred for Israeli and American leadership" in Facebook posts dating back to 2017 and had posted a picture of himself holding what appears to be an assault rifle.

FBI special agent Alex Doran said earlier Sunday that a motive for the attack was not known but "there were indicators on the subject and in his vehicle that indicate a potential nexus to terrorism."

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Bangladesh Police
Office of the Superintendent of Police
Munshiganj District
www.munshigonjpolice.gov.bd

Memo No-1445/E Date: 02 Mar 2026

e-Tender Notice

e-Tender is invited in the National e-GP portal (www.eprocure.gov.bd) for the procurement of following goods:

SL No.	Package Name	Tender ID No	Tender publication Date and Time	Tender/Proposal Closing/ Opening Date & Time
1.	Procurement of High Quality Edible oil (Soyabean Oil)	1237173	03 Mar 2025 15:00	15 Mar 2025 15:00
2.	Procurement of High Quality Lentils (600 grains per 10 grams)	1237706		
3.	Procurement of Wheat Grinding	1237223		
4.	Procurement of High Quality Polao Rice	1237784		
5.	Procurement of High Quality Fuel Wood	1237690		
6.	Rice and Wheat Transportation (Including loading and unloading)	1237786		
7.	Sugar Transportation (From other Districts)	1237742		

This is an online tender, where only e-Tender will be accepted in the national e-GP portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted.

To submit e-Tender, registration in the national e-GP portal (www.eprocure.gov.bd) is required.

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GD-467

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

A war in which all sides lose

Small countries will feel economic impact acutely

The war initiated by the US and Israel against Iran continues to escalate in the Middle East, leaving us deeply concerned as casualties pile up and the global economy faces dire threats. An all-out, protracted war in the Middle East, the world's primary energy hub and one of the main routes for international air and sea transport, would undoubtedly disrupt global trade and push oil prices up. However, for an energy-dependent country like Bangladesh, the impact will go beyond a potential increase in crude and liquefied natural gas (LNG) prices.

Bangladesh imports approximately 110 LNG cargoes and over seven million tonnes of crude and refined petroleum annually, mainly from the Middle East. Besides, 65 percent of the country's total power supply depends on imports. Although experts and officials are not expecting immediate disruptions in the supplies of crude oil, LNG, and coal, there are reasonable concerns among consumers. Global oil prices jumped to $82 a barrel on Monday after three ships were attacked near the Strait of Hormuz. Although prices somewhat eased later on, some experts predict that a prolonged conflict could push them up to around $100 a barrel.

However, it is not just oil prices and supply that Bangladesh has to worry about. The Middle East is our major labour market, with 7.5 million migrants working in Saudi Arabia, the UAE, Qatar, Kuwait, and Oman. Already, at least two Bangladeshis have been killed and seven have been injured. The fate of thousands more who were expecting to migrate to the region has become uncertain as hundreds of incoming and outgoing Middle Eastern flights have been cancelled. Therefore, the war will directly affect Bangladesh's remittance inflow, which has so far kept our foreign exchange reserves healthy and cushioned the country against rising debt repayments and import bills. In the event of a prolonged war, we could face higher energy prices, increased import bills, declining reserves, and a depreciating currency, which could push an already high inflation even higher.

The concerns do not end there. Many ships carrying Bangladeshi RMG products to the US and European markets pass through the Suez Canal, the Strait of Hormuz, or the Bab al-Mandeb Strait. Conflict in or near these crucial gateways may force the use of alternative routes, increasing costs for exporters. This, too, will have a ripple effect on the economy. A Bangladeshi ship is already stranded at a Middle Eastern port with 31 crew members.

Thankfully, the government says it is monitoring the situation, taking precautions to ensure the safety of migrant workers, and preparing for possible economic fallout. But this war should serve as a lesson to reduce Bangladesh's dependence on imported fossil fuels, remittances, and a narrow range of export markets. Ultimately, we hope that major powers realise that a prolonged war, regardless of who prevails, will end up hurting every country.

Urgently address contraceptive crisis

Govt must restore supply chains before fertility gains are reversed

It is deeply concerning that more than one-third of upazilas in the country have run out of all types of government-supplied contraceptives. According to data from the Directorate General of Family Planning (DGFP), condoms are out of stock in 397 of 487 upazilas, while at least 220 upazilas have run out of oral pills. Meanwhile, implants in all upazilas, intrauterine devices (IUDs) in 353, and injectables in 169 are out of stock. At a time when the country is seeing a rise in the total fertility rate (TFR) for the first time in five decades, this crisis could have implications for fertility control.

Condom supplies reportedly fell to just 7.49 lakh in January this year, down from 53.31 lakh in January 2025—an 85 percent drop. Stocks of oral pills, injectables, IUDs, and implants have also plummeted compared to previous years. Family planning was reportedly deprioritised during and after the Covid pandemic, while contraceptive procurement stalled after 2023. The expiry of the 4th Health, Population and Nutrition Sector Programme (4th HPNSP) in mid-2024 further deepened the vacuum. The consequences are already visible in an increased TFR from 2.3 in 2019 to 2.4 in 2025, according to the Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey conducted by the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics in collaboration with Unicef. The survey also found that access to modern contraception has declined significantly.

Although the DGFP has initiated emergency procurement of 1.2 crore condoms and 30 lakh oral pills, the quantities are not enough to meaningfully ease the crisis. Meanwhile, a Tk 1,664 crore procurement project, approved last November, is still at an early stage and will take months to complete. This means the crisis could deepen further, with the consequences borne disproportionately by poorer households who cannot afford to purchase contraceptives from private markets. A prolonged disruption will inevitably lead to more unplanned pregnancies, increased financial strain on families, and setbacks for women's health and decision-making power. Experts warn that, over time, a sustained rise in fertility could undermine the country's prospects of harnessing its demographic dividend.

Bangladesh once stood as a global example in family planning. The disruption in contraceptive supply chains and the absence of timely contingency planning indicate systemic weaknesses that must be addressed urgently. The new administration should treat this shortage as a public health emergency and fast-track procurement, ensure transparent and efficient tendering, and redistribute supplies from overstocked to critically understocked upazilas without delay. Above all, the government must reaffirm its commitment to family planning as a pillar of public health, gender equality, and sustainable development.

THIS DAY IN HISTORY

Sheikh Mujib meets with Bhutto, Yahya

On this day in 1971, East Pakistan leader Sheikh Mujibur Rahman attended a meeting with Zulfikar Ali Bhutto along with President Gen Yahya Khan in Dacca to decide the fate of Pakistan.

BB's independence and the politics of transition

MACRO MIRROR

Dr Fahmida Khatun
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Views expressed in this article are the author's own.

FAHMIDA KHATUN

The recent change in the position of Bangladesh Bank governor has sparked much debate across the country. Many expected Dr Ahsan H Mansur to complete his full term, till August 2028. That was wishful thinking as political governments typically appoint their own people to lead ministries, departments and institutions, a common practice worldwide. Some argue that the central bank governor's role is highly specialised and technical, and given the organisation's importance, it should stay above politics. Moreover, no government should be able to remove a governor before their term ends. We have seen how Jerome Powell, despite attempts by the US president, could not be removed because the chair of the Federal Reserve is protected by law.

However, in Bangladesh, where institutions are fragile and governance often relies on expediency rather than norms and due process, this expectation is unrealistic. In such an environment, power frequently bypasses rules and proper procedures are replaced by political motives. Yet, adhering to established norms is crucial here as institutions need stability and respect that only proper procedure can provide.

While a change in the central bank leadership might be anticipated, how it is managed reveals the resilience and maturity of our institutions. The governor's role goes beyond mere employment. It embodies reliability and public trust in the financial system. If this transition was inevitable, it could have been handled with more finesse. Announcing the removal through the media and the suddenness of the exit diminish both the individual's and the institution's dignity. Despite any policy disagreements, the governor who led the central bank during challenging times deserved formal communication and a respectful farewell.

The appointment of the new governor, announced on the same day, has also generated curiosity as well as criticism, with his qualifications, profession and party affiliation being discussed publicly. This, again, is an exclusive issue for the government as such appointments are not made through a structured recruitment process.

The process of selecting a central bank governor varies across countries. But in most established democracies, it is designed to balance professional competence, institutional independence, and democratic accountability. Professional credibility and macroeconomic expertise are key criteria for the appointment. While the executive branch usually plays a central role in appointments, safeguards are often built in to prevent arbitrary removal and to protect the institution's autonomy.

VISUAL: **SALMAN SAKIB SHAHRYAR**

In many advanced and emerging economies, three common features are observed in the appointment of a central bank governor. First, the appointment is formalised through legal procedures rather than informal political decisions. Second, fixed terms are provided to protect policy continuity. Third, removal before the end of term is either legally restricted or politically costly. In some countries, parliamentary hearings or legislative confirmations add an additional layer of transparency.

The underlying principle is clear. While central banks are accountable to the state, they must be insulated from day-to-day political interference. Monetary policy decisions, such as setting interest rates, managing liquidity, or supervising banks, require technical judgement and long-term vision. If governors can be appointed or dismissed abruptly without due process, markets may question the institution's credibility.

The eruption of mob violence at the Bangladesh Bank premises prior to the transition is deeply troubling. A central bank is not merely an administrative office. It is a symbol of monetary sovereignty and financial discipline. When groups can exert pressure through such physical presence, it sends a damaging signal to markets as well as the international community. Such actions undermine not only the authority of the governor but also the dignity and credibility of the institution itself. Protecting the sanctity of national institutions is essential if we are to preserve public trust and uphold the rule of law.

The whole episode of the governor's removal and the appointment of his successor has once again brought the issue of the Bangladesh Bank's independence to the fore. Central bank independence is a fundamental institutional safeguard essential for economic stability, crisis management, and long-term prosperity. Dr Mansur sought to exercise independence in steering the banking sector, addressing the challenges he inherited when he took over the central bank in August 2024. Governance weaknesses, rising non-performing loans (NPLs), regulatory forbearance, and politically influenced lending had eroded discipline. Addressing such entrenched problems required decisive, and at times unpopular, measures. Dr Mansur initiated steps that were long overdue. For example, boards of several weak banks were dissolved and reconstituted. Asset quality reviews (AQRs) of several banks were undertaken to uncover their true health. More AQRs are ongoing. Five weak banks with mounting NPLs were merged to create a single strong bank. Initiatives to recover stolen assets were taken. Reform initiatives included amendments to the Banking Companies Act and the formulation of a bank resolution framework. The Bangladesh Bank Order, 1972 was also revised and strengthened, which is an essential legal instrument underpinning central bank autonomy. Unfortunately, the amended order did not see the light of day during the interim government, and that reform remains pending at the ministry level.

With the appointment of a new governor, there is an expectation that the reform processes started by Dr Mansur will persist to help the banking sector better serve the economy. Additionally, it is hoped that the new governor will uphold the institution's independence and integrity against any threats. The new governor must ensure that BB's capacity to make monetary and financial stability decisions is independent and not influenced by short-term political pressures, particularly those related to electoral cycles.

Countries such as New Zealand, Canada, the UK, Sweden, Germany, Chile, India and the US illustrate that independent central banks have managed crises effectively. New Zealand pioneered inflation targeting with operational autonomy and transparency. Canada and the UK navigated financial crises through credible, data-driven policy actions. The European Central Bank demonstrated decisive leadership during the euro area sovereign debt crisis. Chile's constitutional entrenchment of central bank independence helped overcome a history of high inflation. India strengthened its monetary framework in 2016 by formally adopting inflation targeting. These examples show that independence enables decisive, credible, and forward-looking action. Conversely, episodes such as Germany's hyperinflation in the 1920s, Argentina's recurring crises, Zimbabwe's economic collapse, and the US "Great Inflation" in the 1960s and 1970s highlight the risk of political influence over central banks.

In Sri Lanka, even within a fragile framework, in the absence of a modern Central Bank Act, decisive monetary tightening, exchange rate adjustment, and coordinated stabilisation measures succeeded in reducing inflation from nearly 70 percent to single digits and averting systemic banking collapse in recent times. This highlights both the high cost of delayed institutional reform and the enduring power of firm, professionally guided policy action.

While the independence of the central bank is of utmost importance, it must be matched by accountability. Like many countries, the Bangladesh Bank must explain its decisions transparently, report to parliament, communicate openly with the public, and justify policy actions. Independence and accountability must go hand in hand. Without transparency and democratic scrutiny, independence would lack legitimacy. Without independence, accountability would be meaningless because decisions would be politically driven. In the end, safeguarding BB's independence is essential to securing sustainable growth and shared prosperity in the country.

The real crisis at BB is not its governor's résumé

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HOSSAIN ZILLUR RAHMAN *and* **SABA EL KABIR**

The removal of Ahsan H Mansur as Bangladesh Bank (BB) governor has been an entirely avoidable drama that has poisoned optics about the new BNP government's policy sagacity. Compounding these optics is the appointment of Md Mostaqur Rahman as the new governor, which has sparked predictable debate over conflicts of interest. An active garment factory owner regulating the financial sector is an obvious anomaly, but the controversy over his résumé obscures the larger issue. More than the credentials, the deeper unease is about the potential shift in the mandate of the central bank—from protecting macroeconomic stability to prioritising industrial credit expansion and how specifically this shift will be crafted under the new order.

The official narrative, promoted by the finance ministry, argues that BB must abandon the "rigidity" of traditional monetary thinking in favour of business-like efficiency. To deliver on its 2026 commitments, the government is pursuing fast, investment-led growth. Arguably, there may be merit in this narrative. After all, growth at under four percent is indeed stagnant and prioritising economic recovery meets both popular and political expectations. The concern is how specifically the blurring of the boundaries between monetary restraint and political ambition will be navigated.

Bangladesh Bank is not the Ministry of Industries. Its role is to achieve and maintain stability: managing liquidity, anchoring prices, and safeguarding the taka. Placing an industrialist at its helm changes that balance. Early policy signals point towards easier liquidity conditions and regulatory flexibility for distressed corporate borrowers. The justification is factory revival. But expanding credit is not the same as expanding productivity. The experience of the last decade shows that liquidity without structural reform can inflate corporate balance sheets while wages stagnate. Bangladesh has already experimented with repeated loan rescheduling and refinancing windows over the past decade—measures that boosted credit on paper but did little to reverse wage stagnation or resolve structural non-performing loan risks.

The Hasina regime did not merely centralise power. It centralised credit and socialised the losses. The banking system became a pipeline for preferential capital allocation, with losses from connected defaults ultimately absorbed by the public. Nominal growth figures improved. Yet by 2024, real wages had declined and middle-skill job creation lagged. The expansion proved uneven and fragile.

Redirecting monetary policy towards sector-specific credit objectives does not necessarily dismantle that pattern. It risks entrenching it under new leadership. Once monetary policy becomes aligned with sectoral objectives, reversing course becomes politically costly, and institutional independence erodes incrementally rather than dramatically. While the faces may change, the structure of credit allocation remains largely intact.

Short-term indicators may look favourable. Exports may rise and growth rates may tick upward. But suppressing borrowing costs to refinance distressed corporate debt increases liquidity without necessarily increasing productivity. The resulting pressure is inflationary. Inflation is not abstract. It erodes purchasing power most severely for those without assets. A corporate executive can hedge against currency weakness; a farmer or wage earner cannot.

The consequences are long-term. By the mid-2030s, Bangladesh's demographic dividend will narrow as dependency ratios rise, making disciplined capital allocation not optional, but essential. That urgency demands investment in agriculture, middle-skill manufacturing, green infrastructure and the promotion of new growth drivers, not narrowly the refinancing of concentrated corporate exposure.

Bangladesh sits on a triple cusp of political, economic, and demographic transition. Crafting the economic roadmap ahead will be a critical test of the political sagacity, economic policymaking, and execution capability of the BNP leadership team. The starting point is a very unfavorable one in economic terms—severely squeezed finances due to the punishing debt-servicing burden on one hand and stagnant revenues on the other.

The Bangladesh Bank saga has to be read within these defining realities. A simplistic framing of speed over stability may give a short-term growth boost while deepening underlying fragilities. These fragilities relate to where institutional integrity stands and which voices get to dictate the small prints of monetary policymaking. The unease over the governor saga ultimately is about these political economy fault lines, not about résumé per se. The cautions have been sounded and the new team at helm of affairs will do well to pay heed.

The Daily Star Reg. No. DA 781 | **EDITOR & PUBLISHER: Mahfuz Anam** Printed by him on behalf of Mediaworld Ltd at Transcraft Ltd, 229, Tejgaon Industrial Area, editor@thedailystar.net | **Registered & Head Offices:** The Daily Star Centre 64-65 Kazi Nazrul Islam Avenue, Dhaka-1215 Phone: 09610222222 | **Newsroom:** Fax- 58156306 reporting@thedailystar.net | **Advertisement:** 01711623910 advertisement@thedailystar.net GPO Box: 3257 | **Subscription:** 01711623906 | thedailystar.net bangla.thedailystar.net/

When coercion becomes a governance mechanism

A CLOSER LOOK

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TASNEEM TAYEB

There are moments when a country's anxieties arrive in the form of an ordinary-looking story: a raid, an arrest, a factory dispute in a crowded industrial belt. It is tempting to read them as separate incidents in the daily churn. And yet, some stories keep returning in different contexts.

Last week, two reports related to extortion sat near each other in the public conversation. One was almost cinematic: an overnight drive in Dhaka's Mohammadpur and Adabor area leading to detention of a hundred. The four-hour sweep was framed as a push against extortionists, teen gangs, and criminal groups. The other report was messier: an export-oriented factory in Rupganj was allegedly attacked after the owner refused to pay an upfront "one-time" demand and a monthly payment thereafter, which was met with a sluggish and contentious police reaction, alongside reports that the victim faced significant hurdles in filing a case that accurately reflected their version of events.

The Rupganj incident carries competing theories: the owner calls it retaliation; the local BNP leader calls it a dispute that escalated. The deeper question is what becomes possible when coercion—whether justified, disguised, denied, or plainly transactional—begins to behave like a parallel authority.

The most useful way to read extortion is not as a moral failure. Morality doesn't help a business owner at 11pm when people are breaking a gate. The more revealing way to read it is as a power dynamic: who, in practice, can impose costs and expect compliance.

In the Mohammadpur-Adabor crackdown story, the state appears decisive. It arrives at night, coordinates a drive, communicates purpose, and shows numbers. It is an authority with visibility. In the Rupganj factory account, authority looks different. This is authority as delay, friction, and ambiguity. Capacity seems to exist. So why does it feel, to citizens and businesses, as if it does not reliably belong to them when they need it? That is the contrast worth sitting with. The state can act, sometimes impressively. Yet, other actors appear able to impose obligations—money, deference, silence—outside legal mandate. In that condition, the citizen's relationship to governance changes subtly.

People begin to calculate to adapt. A factory owner or trader does not need to admire a coercive actor to believe that refusal carries consequences and protection may arrive too late. Once that belief settles, extortion becomes more than theft. It becomes a pricing mechanism in the economy. Hidden payments operate like an informal tax. Formal taxes have schedules and receipts. Informal extraction has variables: who asks, how much, how often, and what refusal results in.

Markets can navigate inflation and even regulatory change. They are less comfortable with things that have no official name. That is why "law and order" language often fails to capture what businesses actually fear. It is not just violence. It is the possibility that the cost of business is being set by actors whose authority is not legible, and therefore not governable.

Rupganj sits inside the industrial horizon of Narayanganj. When a story emerges from there, it travels quickly through business networks. In *Prothom Alo*'s reporting, local businesspeople speak with an unsettling normalcy about paying "some" extortion as routine, while also expressing fear at the scale and brazenness of the factory attack. Routine is one thing; demonstrative violence is another. It teaches others what refusal costs.

VISUAL: **ANWAR SOHEL**

Then there is the way language is beginning to strain under this topic. In recent days, a newly appointed minister offered a public definition that tried to separate coercion in the transport sector from what he described as an "unwritten rule." He argued that money collected on roads should not automatically be called extortion if taken at fixed rates and described as welfare contributions under "mutual understanding." He also acknowledged that the labour organisation aligned with the ruling party typically dominates these arrangements, while insisting this dominance does not automatically make the collection extortionate as it operates within a framework of agreement.

If dominance is present, the border between "agreement" and "compliance" becomes difficult to distinguish. You can call a payment "voluntary," but the person paying is rarely paying in a balanced atmosphere of choice. They are doing so inside a confined zone of consequences. The question is: what happens to the public's expectation of the law when a minister starts blurring the line between crime and custom?

Civil society reacted with unusual speed and sharpness. Transparency International Bangladesh warned that this kind of wording risks legitimising a criminal offence, and that it collides with anti-corruption commitments made by the regime. Their concern was institutional. If extortion is reframed as a compromise, the logic travels to other sectors where informal payments already shadow formal rules.

Early statements become signals, and signals settle into expectations. When allegations of coercive extraction intersect with ruling authority early in a governing cycle, reputational cost spreads outwards, from individuals to the perceived shape of power.

A state needs to remain the only authority that can impose obligations with credible enforcement. Once that exclusivity becomes porous—once citizens and businesses start treating coercive non-state demands as binding, while viewing state protection as optional—the meaning of governance shifts. This is where the two stories, placed side by side, begin to feel less like a contradiction and more like an early warning about how authority is being experienced.

A government can live with disorder. What governments struggle to survive is the normalisation of parallel power: the silent public adjustment to the idea that compliance serves more than one authority.

Extortion is not just a crime story. It is a governance signal. It shows who can add to the cost of operating here. And the danger here lies in its normalisation. Once citizens live as if authority is shared, the state may still conduct raids and count detainees. It will no longer be in charge.

Are Trump's visions for a new Iran achievable?

Ramisa Rob
is editor of Geopolitical Insights at The Daily Star.

RAMISA ROB

As the world grapples with the death of Iran's supreme leader, and as airstrikes continue, the trajectory of the war and, most importantly, whether Iran will survive the fall of its leader are questions of the hour. Iran's endurance is worth scrutiny as they remain exposed, but it is also worth asking what exactly the US can achieve. If regime change is the goal, killing Ayatollah Ali Khamenei alone doesn't achieve it. US President Donald Trump, however, seems to be pursuing it. In a brief telephone interview with *The New York Times* on Sunday, Trump offered three contradicting visions of the outcomes he hoped for in the war he launched on Iran.

One of the options he reportedly suggested was a blueprint of what he did in Venezuela, where the top leader was removed but the rest of the government remained intact, and more willing to work with the US administration. But that is difficult to emulate in Iran. The governance structure is far more complicated. The office of the supreme leader is heavily monitored, controlled by a complex network of institutions, created with the intention of preserving the resilience of the Islamic republic, rather than one person in power. The whole regime is built deliberately to remain in power, even if the leader falls.

Iran's constitution explicitly anticipates sudden leadership loss. It is a regime of strongmen, not an authoritarian regime dependent on one strongman. Article 111 stipulates that if the supreme leader dies or is unable to perform the duties, authority transfers immediately to an interim council composed of the president. On Sunday, Iran formed a provisional leadership council with President Masoud Pezeshkian and Gholam-Hossein Mohseni-Eje'i, head of the judiciary, as key members. There exists no deadline for picking a successor to Khamenei. During war, an interim leadership council can lead the nation for a long period.

The government is also protected by the army, Artesh, and the powerful Iranian Revolutionary Guards (IRGC) which constitutionally exist to serve the regime. Arguably, both are weakened after the strikes, but the IRGC's main goal has always been to fortress the structure of the regime, rather than certain leaders and commanders. Trump and Israel's Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu would have to infiltrate the entire system of the IRGC for the regime to change. Only in the case that the US killed the current assembly members including the president, the top branch of the IRGC, and infiltrated the middle would it be possible to find a form of an Iranian government that would be willing to work with the US, like in Venezuela.

Trump also told *The New York Times* that he had "three very good choices" for new leadership in Iran. "I won't be revealing them now. Let's get the job done first," he said. Trump also told *The Atlantic* that he was open to talking to Iranian leaders. There is a possibility that Trump may have made deals with leaders like the US-backed Reza Pahlavi, or infiltrated other leaders in the Iranian regime. What can be gauged from his vision, though, is that the US does want a puppet government in Iran—one that it can control. The airstrikes should be viewed with a clear US aim for regime change.

But till now, the Iranian president and national security officials have only shared hostile language towards the US, and vowed to avenge Khamenei's death. It is especially hard to imagine a candidate who would be willing to make concessions to Israel, if that is a goal for Trump. But Trump dangled a carrot of lifting sanctions on Iran if the new leadership would pragmatically work with him.

During the 12-Day War last year, Khamenei went into hiding where he named three possible successors: Gholam-Hossein Mohseni-Eje'i; Ali Asghar Hejazi, Khamenei's chief of staff; and Hassan Khomeini, grandson of the founder of the Islamic republic, Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini. It is unlikely that Khamenei's choice aligns with Trump's, and it is likely that the Islamic republic jurists' picks would align with Khamenei, especially after his death.

The concept of Trump picking three leaders is again predicated on the collapse of the entire regime itself, so he has to achieve parts of his first vision to achieve the second. But the unthinkable is not impossible, especially as the Gulf states have also pledged to defend themselves against Iranian attacks and essentially form an anti-Iran coalition.

Trump's final hope for Iran is to see the elite military forces, including officers of the IRGC, turn over their weapons to the Iranian populace. As in the 2000 Serbian Bulldozer Revolution, the US president's hope hinges on the idea that Iran's security forces would stand back—the same security forces that have murdered citizens during protests.

Since Khamenei's death, analysts have warned of the opposite of Trump's vision: the creation of a "garrison state," where the military would be more emboldened to dominate social, political and economic life. That sort of military rule in Iran would prove even more ruthless for the public, who already live in a nation where security forces know fewer red lines than they know bloodshed.

The two-tiered military structure of Iran, along with the Basij, a volunteer militia, supporting their efforts to crush protests, makes it harder for the whole system to execute a US-backed coup of sorts. So far, the regime has reacted promptly with full support of the IRGC, so on a surface level, Khamenei's death has not hurt the regime enough to surrender to public protesters. The public itself remains divided; foreign intervention often gives rise to widespread nationalist sentiments. And foreign intervention in internal politics, where the US president already has picks for Iranian leaders, is not exactly the sign of a democratic revolution.

But a long war, with casualties rising in Tehran, could mount public pressure against the regime. The outcome of that would likely be a civil war, in which case the US or Israel would have to provide assistance to the dissenters against the Iranian local strongmen, their forces, and maybe even their proxies. Is the Pentagon and US prepared to deal with the geopolitical engineering that is required to pull off an Iranian regime change?

CROSSWORD
BY THOMAS JOSEPH

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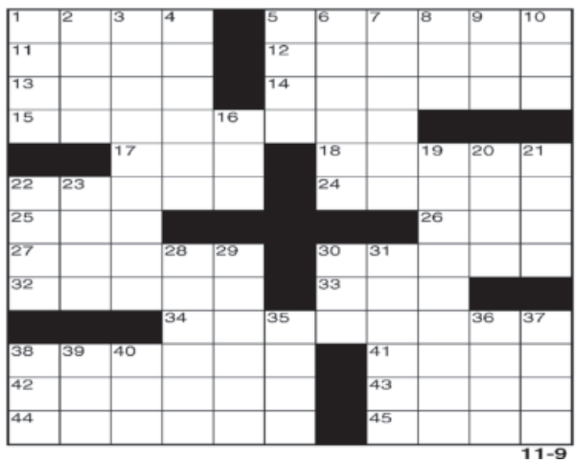

11-9

SATURDAY'S ANSWERS

T	A	P	S	■	O	R	I	G	I	N
E	U	R	O	■	P	O	S	A	D	A
E	R	O	S	■	E	M	P	L	O	Y
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WRITE FOR US. SEND US YOUR OPINION PIECES TO
dsopinion@gmail.com.

Pabna University of Science and Technology
Planning and Development Office
Rajapur, Pabna-6600

Memo No. PUST/PDW/e-GP/OTM/Laboratory Equipment/511/2329; Date: 01/03/2026

e-Tender Notice (FY/2025-26)

e-Tender is invited in the National e-GP System Portal (http://www.eprocure.gov.bd) for the Procurement of following goods under "Pabna University of Science and Technology Revenue Budget", PUST, Pabna.

Sl No.	e-Tender ID	APP ID	Package No. & Invitation Ref. No.	Name of works	Tender publication date & time	Tender closing date & time	Method
01.	1237743	219731	2025511	Procurement of Laboratory Equipment for the Department of EECE, Pabna University of Science and Technology, Pabna.	02 Mar, 2026 18:00pm	31 Mar, 2026 17:00pm	OTM

This is an online tender where only e-Tender 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 banks. Further information and guideline are available in the National e-GP System Portal and from e-GP help desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd).

Md. Sohel Rana
Planning Officer
Planning, Development and Works Office
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GD-460

Living in fear in the Middle East

FROM PAGE 1

In Bahrain, SM Tareq from Azimpur in Sandwip, Chattogram, died, and two others were injured after missile fragments landed in the Salman Industrial Area, Rais Hasan Sarower, Bangladesh's ambassador to Bahrain, told The Daily Star.

The embassy is in close contact with Tareq's family and is monitoring the condition of the injured, who are receiving treatment at a local hospital.

While most Bangladeshis in Bahrain remain safe, he described the security situation as unpredictable.

"Drones and missiles appear suddenly rather than following a continuous pattern, making it difficult to anticipate potential danger," he said, adding that many expatriates are staying indoors as a precaution.

The Bangladesh embassy in Bahrain has opened a Facebook group to share updates and instructions with community leaders and is actively monitoring developments.

Members of the Bangladeshi community say tensions have risen sharply amid escalating regional conflict following the US and Israeli airstrikes on Iran.

Several areas have experienced incidents in recent days, said Mohammad Emon, president of the Bangladesh Youth Club in Bahrain.

"Attacks happened in Seef, including two towers -- S Tower and a hotel in the area. There were also incidents in Hura and Isa Town. The most severe attack occurred in Isa Town."

He also mentioned an incident near Juffair, close to the US Navy base.

The authorities evacuated much of the area, including residential hotels housing foreign nationals.

"From the first day, Juffair was cleared. Most Bangladeshis living there have moved elsewhere. Only a few go back occasionally for work, but no one is really staying there now."

Although international reports often mention Manama, the capital has not faced direct damage so far. However, the repeated use of the capital's name has heightened anxiety.

Bangladeshis living near affected areas are "in a state of panic", Emon said, adding that many have relocated to comparatively safer neighbourhoods.

The Bahrain government has instructed residents to remain indoors unless necessary and has been sending emergency alerts ahead of potential attacks.

Over in the UAE, fears intensified after the foreign ministry confirmed that another Bangladeshi national, Saleh Ahmed from Sylhet, was killed after being struck by debris from an aerial attack on a civilian installation.

In a statement issued yesterday, the ministry said the government was "deeply saddened" by the loss of lives and expressed "grave concern over the escalating situation in the region".

The Bangladesh embassy in the UAE is maintaining close contact with local authorities and is extending assistance to repatriate Ahmed's remains once commercial flights resume.

The news has shaken Bangladeshi expatriates in Abu Dhabi and other cities, particularly those working near key infrastructure sites.

"We never thought something like this could happen here. Now every loud sound makes us nervous," said a construction worker, requesting anonymity.

Another resident said many are limiting movement to work and home. The death has made people "constantly worried", especially those employed near sensitive locations.

"Our families back home keep calling us again and again," he said, adding that although they are trying to remain calm, the anxiety persists.

Regarding the four Bangladeshis injured following the attack at Kuwait International Airport, the foreign ministry said they "have received necessary medical treatment and are currently reported to be in stable condition".

The Bangladesh embassy in Kuwait is in regular contact with the injured, and the ambassador personally visited them at the hospital.

Despite their stable condition, the incident has heightened fear among expatriates.

"When we heard that Bangladeshis were hurt, everyone became scared -- we are going to work and coming straight back home," said a grocery shop employee living near the area.

Another expatriate said many workers are closely following news updates and official advisories amid fears of further escalation.

"Even though the injured brothers are stable now, the tension has not gone away," he said.

The foreign ministry also said that the Bangladesh Shipping Corporation vessel Banglar Joyjatra is stranded at Jebel Ali Port in the UAE, though all crew members are safe and in communication with the embassy.

Reiterating its concern, the government said the "safety and security of more than six million Bangladeshis living in the Middle East are the top-most concern of the government".

The embassies in the affected countries have been instructed to urge nationals to remain vigilant and strictly follow host government guidelines, while Dhaka continues to monitor the situation closely, it added

Devotees gather as Lalon festival begins in Kushtia

The annual Dol Purnima observance at the shrine of mystic poet Lalon Shah began yesterday (March 2) at Chheuriya Akhrabari in Kushtia, drawing Baul singers and devotees despite a reduced schedule due to Ramadan. Traditionally a three-day event featuring music and a rural fair, this year's programme has been shortened to two days, with cultural performances and the fair suspended.

Organisers said the focus will remain on spiritual discussions and rituals. Proceedings will conclude at noon today.

Devotees had begun gathering days earlier, singing Lalon songs across the shrine compound. Rituals include Gurukarya, Rakhial service, midnight Adhibash, dawn Balya service and the Purna service. Security has been tightened, with CCTV surveillance and law enforcement on duty.

Flights scrapped, visa clock ticking

FROM PAGE 1

that he needs to return at any cost so he does not lose his job amid the ongoing uncertainty arising from the tense situation in the Middle East.

His experience reflects the uncertainty that has gripped migrant workers and their families since Middle East air travel was disrupted following the US and Israel's joint military attacks on Iran and Iran's retaliation on February 28.

While some are rushing home, fearing the situation may worsen and flights may become harder to secure later, others -- despite fear and family pressure -- are trying to return to work as soon as possible to protect their income and keep their visas valid.

A total of 131 flights to and from HSIA were cancelled in four days, including today, following the attacks, airport authorities said.

Amid the evolving security situation, Iran, Iraq, Kuwait, the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, Qatar and Jordan closed their airspace, disrupting air connectivity across the region, they added.

Amanullah, 40, travelled from Cumilla for a Biman flight to Dammam scheduled at 2:25pm yesterday. He arrived at the airport at 10:00am, only to be told later that the flight had been cancelled.

He said he had asked why the flight was cancelled, as everything seemed normal until 12:30pm. Airport staff told him that a drone attack had occurred at Dammam airport that morning, prompting the temporary suspension of flights to the destination.

He is now anxious as his visa remains valid for only four more days. "If I cannot go within four days, what will I do?" he said, adding that his family depends on his earnings.

"I am now trying to find an alternative route, including searching for urgent tickets to Jeddah or Riyadh. I can then travel back to Dammam by road."

Salma Akhter, 30, from Shariatpur, said she left home early yesterday morning for a US-Bangla Airlines flight scheduled at 3:55pm to Abu Dhabi. She entered the airport around 11:00am and waited until 12:30pm, when she was told the flight was cancelled. "I have been working abroad for about 10 years. I was on a seven-month leave and now I am just trying to go back to work."

Lipi Akhter, 30, was travelling with Salma. She had come home on an eight-month leave after spending two years abroad.

Both said they had contacted the airline on Sunday and were told they could travel yesterday. "We were aware of attacks and explosions being reported over the last two days, but were told the strikes were centred on US bases and not elsewhere," Salma said.

Even so, Lipi said they remained tense, and family members were increasingly worried about whether they would be able to fly and whether further disruptions could follow.

"Our visas were arranged without cost, as the households we work for processed them. We fear that if travel becomes impossible, there will be no compensation, and the opportunity could be lost. I need to get back to work, even if that means taking a risk."

While outbound travellers waited for clarity, inbound passengers described their own anxieties as they returned home, unsure when they would be able to leave again.

Zakir Hossain, who returned from Saudi Arabia yesterday on a six-month leave after six years, said he had spent the last two days worrying. "My family repeatedly told me not to travel to Bangladesh if I sensed serious trouble. I still chose to come because I wanted to spend Eid here and also in case the situation escalates and I can't come later."

After landing in Dhaka around 11:00am, he said he was happy to see his relatives, but remained worried about whether he would be able to return to work on time or whether work would still be available.

Hossain, 47, arrived from Jeddah on a Saudia flight on a five-month leave. He was to travel to his home in Netrokona. "I was tense the whole time as my family had been calling me since Sunday, asking me to stay alert while travelling.

"Many Bangladeshis were returning during Ramadan as planned, while others who might have waited until after Eid instead bought higher-priced tickets to come now because of the uncertainty."

Till 11:50pm on February 28, 23 flights were cancelled, including one each of Emirates, Gulf Air and Flydubai, three of Air Arabia, six of US-Bangla Airlines and 11 of Biman Bangladesh Airlines, airport sources said.

On March 1 (Sunday), a further 40 flights were cancelled, including those of Jazeera Airways, Emirates, Gulf Air, Flydubai, Qatar Airways, SalamAir, Air Arabia (Sharjah), Kuwait Airways, US-Bangla Airlines and Biman Bangladesh Airlines.

Yesterday till 10:00pm, another 46 flights were cancelled, including those of Qatar Airways, Emirates, Gulf Air, Flydubai, Kuwait Airways, Air Arabia (Sharjah), Biman Bangladesh Airlines and US-Bangla Airlines.

Around 10:00pm last night, airport authorities informed that another 22 flights have been cancelled today -- four of Qatar Airways, four of Emirates, four of Gulf Air, four of flydubai, two of Kuwait Airways and four of Jazeera Airways.

Meanwhile, 44 flights departed for different Middle East destinations till yesterday, according to airport officials.

They said flights to Muscat and multiple destinations in Saudi Arabia continued operating between February 28 and March 2 despite widespread disruptions.

On February 28 (from 2:00pm to 11:59pm), one Muscat-bound flight (BG122) and five Saudi-bound flights operated, including services to Jeddah, Riyadh and Madinah. On March 1, four flights operated to Muscat, while 16 Saudi-bound flights ran to Dammam, Jeddah and Madinah, including services of Biman Bangladesh Airlines and other carriers. On March 2, five Muscat-bound flights operated and 13 Saudi-bound flights ran to Dammam, Jeddah and Madinah, officials said.

Contacted by The Daily Star yesterday, Shariful Hasan, associate director of BRAC's Migration Programme and Youth Platform, said around 30-40 flights are being cancelled daily. "Many people's visa validity is nearing its end, so they are anxious about whether they will be able to travel and what will happen if their visas expire.

"I think the government should, in this context, work with the embassies of these countries in Dhaka and with our Bangladesh missions abroad to engage with their foreign ministries and take steps to extend visas where needed."

He added that Bangladesh sends over 10 lakh workers abroad every year, and around 70-80 percent go to the Middle East.

"If overseas employment in the Middle East becomes limited or is halted, and our workers cannot find work after going there, it will cause long-term damage for us.... We need to observe the situation over the next few days and see which way it goes."

IDRA, Sonali Bank

FROM PAGE 12

Contacted, he said he stepped down for personal reasons.

However, a senior finance ministry official, requesting anonymity, said Bari had been signalled to resign after the new government assumed office.

The official described the transition as part of the normal process following a change in administration.

Muslim Chowdhury, chairman of the board of Sonali Bank, submitted his resignation in person at the bank's head office, sources said.

Chowdhury, a former comptroller and auditor general, was appointed by the Yunus administration on August 24.

Two killed

FROM PAGE 2

tried to fish in the pond while the other tried to resist them. There are varying reports which group went to fish in the pond.

Shamsul Alam said Siddique is the general secretary of ward-2 of Dhamainagar union unit BNP. He claimed that Asmat Ali and his men used to control fish farming in the pond before August 5, 2024. After the fall of the Sheikh Hasina government, the operations of the pond went to Siddique, but the Asmat group did not want to give up control.

When Siddique's men went to catch fish yesterday, Asmat's men attacked them and mercilessly beat them, which left two people dead, he said.

Some 10 to 15 people from both sides were injured in the clash. They were taken to the 250-bed Sirajganj General Hospital and Shaheed Ziaur Rahman Medical College Hospital in Bogura.

Two of them succumbed to their injuries at 250-bed Sirajganj General Hospital, said Additional SP Saiful. He added that the deceased were supporters of BNP leader Siddique.

Contacted, assistant director of the hospital, Dr Akikun Nahar, said two people were brought to the hospital in critical condition with several injury marks in their bodies. "We tried our best but they succumbed to their injuries," she said.

Contacted, Raiganj Upazila Nirbahi Officer (UNO) Abdul Khaleq Patoary said the pond is leased out in the name of a woman.

The Daily Star tried to contact Asmat and some of his associates multiple times for comments but no one received the calls or responded to text messages.

No case was filed till the filing of the report at around 8:00pm, said Golam Kibria, officer-in-charge (OC) of Raiganj Police Station.

Saifuzzaman's UK property financier

FROM PAGE 12

entities tied to the Mayfair-based firm have now entered insolvency, the FT added.

MFS provided what it called "complex, property-backed lending". The company's main products included buy-to-let mortgages and bridging loans -- short-term debt that borrowers could use for various kinds of investments in real assets, according to The Telegraph.

After the fall of the Hasina regime, it appeared that nearly all of the MFS-linked mortgages were repaid. At the time, lawyers for Paresh Raja, the founder and chief executive officer of MFS, said that MFS had "a large underwriting team who scrutinises every loan and carries out detailed and thorough anti-money laundering and other checks."

They emphasised that Raja "has no connection to Bangladesh or the Hasina government", it added.

MFS differed in important ways from mainstream banks. It was a shadow bank, meaning it offered loans but did not take deposits. As a result, it was not subject to the strict regulations that high street lenders must adhere to, according to The Telegraph.

The FT said major global lenders, including Barclays, Jefferies and Apollo's Atlas SP Partners, are facing significant exposure following the sudden collapse of UK-based mortgage provider MFS amid allegations of fraud and "double-pledging" of collateral.

Barclays, which provided both banking services and financing to MFS, has an estimated exposure of £600 million. The bank reportedly began blocking certain transactions for the lender in late 2025 before freezing all related accounts in early January, as per the FT report.

Barclays declined to comment on the matter.

The Telegraph said the fallout from property deals linked to Hasina's government continues. Authorities in Bangladesh are also looking into Chowdhury's affairs amid a broader investigation into flats and houses bought by former allies and family members of the prime minister.

In Britain, Labour MP Tulip Siddiq, Hasina's niece, resigned as Treasury minister in January last year amid growing pressure over allegations of an anti-corruption scandal in Bangladesh.

Siddiq faces a corruption trial in Bangladesh over claims that she illegally received a plot of land from her aunt's government. She denies the allegations.

Raja did not respond to a request for comment. The Telegraph was unable to reach Chowdhury for comment.

Bangladesh condemns

FROM PAGE 12

mutual respect and adherence to international law can resolve disputes," the ministry said.

In the statement on Sunday, the Bangladesh government said that the continuation of hostilities in the Middle East will only endanger regional peace, stability and the wellbeing of civilian populations. In the context of the emerging situation in the Middle East, the foreign ministry yesterday convened an inter-ministerial meeting to assess the current situation, especially the security of the Bangladeshi citizens in the Gulf region and the fate of the stranded Bangladeshis who failed to fly because of air traffic challenges.

After the meeting, Foreign Minister Khalilur Rahman said the deaths of two Bangladeshis and the injury of seven others in the ongoing conflict in the Middle East give a significant message.

The foreign ministry has already spoken to the officials of the concerned countries including the UAE, Qatar, Kuwait and Bahrain. The Bangladeshi diplomats in those countries visited the injured citizens.

The foreign ministers of Kuwait and Bahrain and the state minister for foreign affairs of Qatar have already called Khalilur and provided full assurance of security and protection of Bangladeshi citizens in those countries.

The government has all preparations to facilitate the travel of those who are stranded and bring back the two dead bodies home as soon as flight operations resume.

Prime Minister's Foreign Affairs Adviser Humaiun Kobir said Bangladesh's position on the Middle East crisis is clear.

"We want de-escalation of this situation. We are strongly calling for choosing the path of diplomacy. And, our citizens who have employment in the Middle East in various places and those stranded are our topmost priority. We are also taking initiatives to extend visas for those who are facing such issues," he said.

All the relevant ministries are coordinating for safety, accommodation, visa and ticketing issues, said Shama Obaid, the state minister for foreign affairs.

In another development, four ministers of Gulf countries spoke to Foreign Minister Khalilur Rahman and assured him of all necessary measures to ensure the overall security, protection, and welfare of Bangladeshi migrants living in their respective countries amid the conflict.

Those who called Khalilur include Kuwaiti Foreign Minister Sheikh Jarrah Jaber Al-Ahmed Al-Sabah, Bahraini Foreign Minister Abdullatif bin Rashid Al-Zayani, UAE Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Sheikh Abdullah bin Zayed Al Nahyan, and Qatar's Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Sultan bin Saad Al Muraikhi.

Found with throat slit, 7yr-old girl

FROM PAGE 2

abducted and taken to the secluded hilltop by miscreants who intended to murder her.

Her paternal uncle said it would have been impossible for a child to travel such a distance alone and insisted she had been kidnapped. He added that the family had no known enemies.

"We don't know what will happen to my niece. How can anyone be so cruel as to try to slaughter a child? We want justice and the immediate arrest and punishment of those responsible."

The victim underwent an emergency operation on Sunday evening. She was taken to the operating theatre again last morning for a second surgery to stabilise her respiratory tract, while anxious family members waited outside.

Dr Selim Kashem Chowdhury, an ENT consultant at CMCH, said the girl's trachea was severely injured in the attack but noted that she was rescued within half an hour.

Doctors performed a standard tracheostomy and inserted a tube to assist her breathing. "As long as the tube remains in place, she will be unable to speak. We hope to remove it in two to three weeks, depending on her recovery."

Law enforcement agencies, including police and the Rab, have launched investigations into the incident.

Sitakunda Police Station Officer-in-Charge Mahi Noor-e-Islam said the victim's mother filed a case against unidentified individuals on Sunday. "We are investigating the matter with the highest priority, though no arrests had been made as of this [yesterday] afternoon."

Sources within Rab-7 said they were conducting a shadow investigation to determine the motive behind the attack.

Meanwhile, Shakila Yasmin Suchona, additional superintendent of police (Sitakunda circle), Chattogram, said they were also trying to unearth the reason behind the incident.

"We have collected the footages of all CCTV cameras between the spot of the incident and the victim's house. We have also requested the CMCH authorities to collect the swab specimen of the victim so that it can be confirmed whether the girl was raped."

Contacted, Dr Reshma Sharmin, of the One Stop Crisis Centre at CMCH, said sample of the victim was collected but was yet to be tested. "We could not know the history from the patient as her throat was slit and she cannot yet speak."

Yunus gets VVIP status

FROM PAGE 1

the stringent security coverage of the Special Security Force (SSF) for a year.

The gazette said that he has been given this status as per Section 2(a) of the Special Security Force Act, 2021.

Section 2(a) of the law states, "'Very important person' means the Head of State or Head of Government of a foreign country and includes any other person declared by the Government, by notification in the Official Gazette, to be such person for the purposes of this Act."

The law does not automatically grant SSF protection to outgoing heads of state, unless they are declared VVIP.

The gazette was not publicised by the interim government. It was not uploaded to the Bangladesh Government Press website, which archives all gazettes issued by the government and updates every day.

As a VVIP, Dr Yunus will now get SSF protection at his residence and workplace, according to the President, Prime Minister or Chief Adviser and Very Important Persons Security Rules, 2025.

All events attended by him will undergo security screening, and comprehensive security will be provided during all travels within Bangladesh and abroad, with coordination from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and local embassies.

The SSF will also conduct background vetting of staff who come into regular contact with the VVIP, and the entry and exit of all visitors, vehicles, and objects at the VVIP's residence, office, or event venues will be strictly regulated by the force.

Yunus left the state guest house Jamuna on February 28, after living there for nearly 18 months.

Security in diplomatic zone

FROM PAGE 12

other issues of mutual interest.

At the outset, Salahuddin welcomed the ambassador and said the US is a close ally of Bangladesh and has been working as a close partner in counterterrorism and the security sector.

Christensen said America wants to strengthen relations with Bangladesh.

He said the US is interested in implementing the SPEAR programme to consolidate security arrangements for the US embassy in Dhaka and the wider diplomatic area.

The envoy said a memorandum of understanding needed to be signed quickly for the programme, otherwise the US fund could be returned or shifted elsewhere.

The home minister said the government wants to implement the programme soon with approval from the highest level.

The US ambassador also congratulated Salahuddin on assuming charge of the home ministry.

On illegal migration, the envoy said the US wants to implement the ENV programme in Bangladesh, adding that its implementation would bring Bangladesh into a "green zone" in the US immigration sector.

He said the US has long supported Bangladesh in counterterrorism, adding that since 2010 it has trained around 30,000 Bangladesh police officers -- from investigating officer level to deputy inspector general (DIG) level -- and provided necessary equipment. However, he said the support has not yielded the desired results due to officers' retirement and transfers.

Salahuddin assured the diplomat of necessary steps and instructed relevant ministry officials to organise a meeting or workshop with the stakeholders.

Among others, Joint Secretary Rebecca Khan of the Political-1 Wing of the Home Ministry, and US embassy officials Eric Geelan, Shane Sanders, Tanik Munir, and Riley Palmertree were present at the meeting.

Nurul Islam

FROM PAGE 12

chief whip and six whips in parliament. President Mohammed Shahabuddin made the appointments under the Bangladesh (Whips) Order, 1972.

The chief whip shall be responsible for keeping members of parliament supplied with information about parliamentary business, securing their attendance at sessions, arranging the business of each sitting of parliament and performing other related duties.

A whip shall perform such functions as may be assigned to him by the chief whip.

BNP playing a dual

FROM PAGE 3

heard that the July Charter was being challenged in court by certain quarters.

"I wonder whether he has merely 'heard' about the court proceedings or whether they themselves orchestrated it," Asif said.

He urged the government not to use the court as a "political shield" and called on ruling party lawmakers to take oath to the Constitutional Reform Council before the upcoming parliamentary session.

He criticised the government for opting for constitutional amendments instead of agreeing to a full rewrite of the Constitution, alleging that it has historically been altered to serve party interests.

He claimed the current administration was following the same path through "selective and preferred reforms".

Asif further demanded the impeachment of the president and said Parliament should not begin its first session with a presidential address.

Meanwhile, NCP Convener Nahid Islam yesterday alleged that an attempt to use the judiciary for political purposes and make it partisan yet again was underway.

Nahid, lawmaker for Dhaka-11 and opposition chief whip in the Jatiya Sangsad, also said the current government was formed based on the public mandate given through the July Charter and the referendum.

"There is an attempt to use the court politically to cancel that mandate by making the judiciary partisan again," he said, warning that turning the court into a tool of a party agenda would have serious consequences.

"Our struggle is not over. We have to restart the movement for judicial reform and against corruption and hegemony," he said while addressing as chief guest at an iftar event organised by NCP at a convention centre in Chattogram's Panchlaish area.

Sworn in, still missing from govt portals

FROM PAGE 3

ministers, with only three having their biographies uploaded.

The foreign ministry appears to be the most updated, having published the biographies of its minister, Dr Khalilur Rahman, and state minister, Shama Obaed Islam.

The ministries of education and primary and mass education have uploaded the biography of their minister, ANM Ehsanul Hoque Milon, who heads both ministries. However, there is no information about the state minister, Bobby Hajjaj.

Similarly, the two divisions under the power and energy ministry have published information about their minister, Iqbal Hassan Mahmood, but not about the state minister.

At the civil aviation and tourism ministry, the biography of state minister Rashiduzzaman Millat has been uploaded, but the profile of minister Afroza Khanam is not available.

The women and children affairs ministry has uploaded the profile of its state minister, Farzana Sharmin. However, although she also serves as state minister for the social welfare ministry, that ministry's website does not carry her profile.

Websites of several key ministries -- finance, home affairs, health and family welfare, commerce, agriculture, environment, law, industries, and information and broadcasting -- have yet to publish any profile of their heads.

Even the defence ministry website, overseen by the prime minister, displays only his photograph without any profile.

The Prime Minister's Office website includes a section for the prime minister's biography, but the link leads to no information.

In some cases, technical issues further limit access.

The website of the road transport and highways division under the road transport and bridges ministry shows a "page couldn't be found" message for the minister's profile. Sheikh Rabiul Alam heads the ministry.

The Cabinet Division's website also does not feature the prime minister's profile. Although it lists ministers and state ministers along with their portfolios and appointment dates, no biographical information has been uploaded.

Talking to The Daily Star, AKM Abdul Awal Mazumder, a former secretary, said updating official websites is a routine administrative task that should be completed shortly after a new cabinet takes office.

"This is the age of information technology, and such lapses reflect poorly on the ministries concerned," he said.

He said citizens naturally want to know about newly appointed ministers and state ministers after a government assumes office. "That is why their biodata should be uploaded within 24 to 48 hours of taking oath."

He added that millions of Bangladeshis live abroad and may seek information about their representatives, while government websites serve as primary sources of official information for citizens, journalists, researchers, and foreign stakeholders.

"To ensure that people can easily learn about the government's key figures, I hope their profiles will be uploaded without delay," he said.

An official at the home ministry, speaking on condition of anonymity, said the minister's information will be uploaded soon.

Sources at the agriculture ministry said such tasks are usually handled by the personal wings of ministers and state ministers. "Since officers have not yet been appointed to the entire wing, it is taking some time," one source said.

A finance ministry official, also requesting anonymity, acknowledged the delay.

"This should have been done on the very first day. Not uploading ministers' biodata is a form of negligence -- it should not have happened. I hope it will be completed within a few days," the official said.

HC order on July

FROM PAGE 3

Aneek R Haque represented the state during the hearing in a packed courtroom.

Supreme Court lawyers Gazi Md Mahbub Alam and Chowdhury Md Redwan E Khuda recently submitted the petitions.

They said there is no provision of referendum and July charter in the constitution.

The July charter is a major reform initiative introduced by the interim government following the 2024 July uprising, with the stated aim of preventing a return to authoritarian rule.

The reforms were put to a referendum alongside parliamentary elections on February 12, where the "Yes" vote prevailed with a turnout of 60.26%.

Speechwriter

FROM PAGE 4

post on a contractual basis in Grade-4.

Journalist Md Sujauddoula (Sujan) has also been appointed as a deputy press secretary on a contractual basis in the Grade-4 pay scale.

Journalist Md Jahidul Islam Rony has been appointed as a Deputy Press Secretary to the Prime Minister on a contractual basis in Grade-4.

Journalist Shahadat Shadhin has also been appointed as a deputy press secretary in Grade-4.

The appointments are subject to the condition that each appointee relinquishes any employment or professional engagement with any other profession, business, or government, semi-government, or private institution or organisation.

The notifications state that the appointments will take effect from the date of joining and will remain valid for the duration of the Prime Minister's tenure or until further orders, whichever comes first.

Hanif warned I would

FROM PAGE 3

He said on July 19, police intelligence agencies and AL leaders pressured his parents and younger sister to travel from Belkuchi in Sirajganj to Dhaka to bring him home. Despite the intimidation, Mahin said he refused to leave Dhaka and continued organising protests.

Mahin further testified that before the crackdown he had received intelligence that then prime minister Sheikh Hasina had directly ordered a mass killing operation and an internet shutdown to conceal the scale of violence from domestic and international audiences.

He detailed how the quota reform movement turned into a mass uprising and alleged that law enforcers, along with AL leaders and activists, carried out brutal attacks on unarmed students, leaving more than 1,400 people dead and over 25,000 injured.

Describing his hospital visits on July 25–26 to document casualties, Mahin said Bangladesh Medical College Hospital in Uttara removed at least 30 bullet-riddled bodies, although only 11 deaths were officially recorded.

At Bangladesh-Kuwait Maitree Hospital, intelligence agencies allegedly threatened doctors and staff and surrounded the premises to detain student leaders. Mahin said they managed to escape disguised as patients in an ambulance.

The other accused are AFM Bahauddin Nasim, Mohammad Ali Arafat, Sheikh Fazle Shams Parash, Moinul Hossain Khan Nikhil, Saddam Hussain, and Sheikh Wali Asif Enan. All are absconding.

Meanwhile, the prosecution yesterday completed hearing on charges against former ministers Rashed Khan Menon and Qamrul Islam before ICT-1 over alleged crimes against humanity during the July uprising.

Chief Prosecutor Aminul Islam read out three charges and pleaded with the tribunal to frame them, with both accused present in the dock.

He said Menon and Qamrul attended a July 19, 2024 meeting of the 14-party alliance chaired by Hasina, where the decision to impose a nationwide curfew and use lethal force against student protesters was authorised.

It felt like I was inside

FROM PAGE 3

cell after a 20–30 minutes' drive.

He described the cell as an 8-by-10-foot room with an unplastered wall, a small bed, an oily pillow and a worn bed sheet. He said he was given old clothes to wear.

A light over the bed remained switched on at all times, and a noisy exhaust fan was fixed high on the wall. The room had a metal-grill door and an outer wooden door, both locked after he was placed inside.

At one stage, the tribunal chairman asked the prosecution to ensure the witness's well-being. Chief Prosecutor Aminul Islam later sought an adjournment of Iqbal's testimony until March 5, which the tribunal allowed.

Chattogram Development Authority
Ministry of Housing and Public Works
Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh

Memo No. MIS/SnUPSP/HP/2018/84/p-2/260 Date: 01/03/2026

e-Tender Notice

e-Tender is invited in e-GP Portal (http://www.eprocure.gov.bd) by System Analyst, Chattogram Development Authority, Chattogram for Procurement of:

Tender ID No.	Package No.	Tender name	Tender document last selling (date and time)	Tender closing & opening (date and time)
1231413	MIS/SnUPSP/HP/2018/84/p02	Supply and Installation 64 Nos. Battery and related works.	11-Mar-2026 10:30	12-Mar-2026 1:30pm

This is an online tender, where only e-Tender will be accepted in the National e-GP Portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted. To submit e-Tender, registration in the National e-GP System Portal (http://www.eprocure.gov.bd) is required.
The fees for downloading the e-Tender documents from the National e-GP 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 helpdesk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd).

Md. Mostafa Jamal
System Analyst
Chattogram Development Authority

GD-463

Khulna University, Khulna
Office of the Project Director
"Further Infrastructural Development of Khulna University (2nd Revised)" Project

Memo No. KU/FIDP-123/2025-**23** Date: 01.03.2026

e-Tender Notice No. 05/2024-2025

e-Tender is invited in the National e-GP System Portal (http://www.eprocure.gov.bd) for the procurement of:

Tender ID No.	Package No.	Name of the works	Online tender closing and opening date
1192032	KU/FID-123/2025	Procurement of Lift for 4th Academic Building (Lot-1)	29.03.2026 9:30am

This is an online tender, where only e-Tender will be accepted in the National e-GP Portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted. To submit e-Tender, registration in the National e-GP System Portal (http://www.eprocure.gov.bd) is required. The fees for downloading the e-Tender documents from the National e-GP System Portal have to be deposited online through any registered bank branches upto banking hours on e-GP System. Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP System Portal and e-GP help desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd).

Signed
Dr. Md. Hasanuzzaman
Project Director
"KUFID (2nd Revised)" Project

GD-465

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Ministry of Industries
Bangladesh Standards and Testing Institution
Maan Bhaban, 116/A, Tejgaon Industrial Area, Dhaka-1208
Website: http://www.bstl.gov.bd

স্মারক নং-৩৬.০৫.০০০০.১০৯. ০১.০১১.২৫ তারিখ: ১৭ ফাল্গুন ১৪৩২ বঙ্গাব্দ / ০২ মার্চ ২০২৬ খ্রিস্টাব্দ

e-Tender Notice

This e-Tender is invited in the National e-GP System Portal (http://www.eprocure.gov.bd) by BSTI, Dhaka for the procurement of following Goods:

Sl. No.	Tender ID No.	Name of Goods & Related Services	Tender Last Selling Date & Time	Tender Closing & Opening Date & Time
1.	1165517	Procurement of Five (05) types of instruments for the Paper Testing Lab of BSTI, Dhaka.	15 March,2026 at 17:00 PM	16 March,2026 at 11:00 AM
2.	1157082	Procurement of Refrigerator, Refrigerator-Freezer & Freezer Energy Efficiency Performance Test Chamber (10 Stations) for BSTI Divisional Office, Chattogram.	29 March,2026 at 17:00 PM	30 March,2026 at 11:00 AM
3.	1088314	Procurement of required equipments for Textile Testing Lab of BSTI.	15 March,2026 at 17:00 PM	16 March,2026 at 11:30 AM
4.	1157083	Procurement of Annual Maintenance/Service Contract for 01 (One) AC Testing Lab and 02 (Two) Refrigerator Testing Labs (01 Test Positions + 04 Test Positions) at BSTI, Dhaka.	15 March,2026 at 17:00 PM	16 March,2026 at 12:30 PM

e-Tender detail can be downloaded from 3rd March, 2026 after 17:00 (GMT+6) on e-GP System Portal (http://www.eprocure.gov.bd) for pursue.

This is an online tender, where only e-Tender will be accepted in the National e-GP portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted. To submit e-Tender, please register on e-GP System (http://www.eprocure.gov.bd) portal.

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

(Md. Tuhin Ahamed)
Deputy Director (Admin)

GD-456

দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি

১। প্রতিষ্ঠানের নাম ঃ ৭ সিগন্যাল ব্যাটালিয়ন, রামু সেনানিবাস।

২। কাজের বিবরণ ঃ ২০২৫-২০২৬ অর্থ বছরে বাজেট কোড ১১৯০৬০১১০৪২৩৩/*৪১২৫১০১ তালিকাভুক্ত সামরিক মালামাল (মিলিটারী ইনভেন্টরীজ) খাতে বরাদ্দকৃত অর্থ হতে এই ইউনিটের জন্য তালিকাভুক্ত সামরিক মালামাল ক্রয় বাবদ।

৩। দরপত্র বিক্রয় শুরুর তারিখ ঃ ০৩ মার্চ ২০২৬।

৪। দরপত্র বিক্রয়ের শেষ তারিখ ঃ ১০ মার্চ ২০২৬।

৫। দরপত্র জমা করার শেষ তারিখ ঃ ১১ মার্চ ২০২৬।

৬। দরপত্র খোলার তারিখ ঃ ১২ মার্চ ২০২৬।

৭। বিস্তারিত তথ্যের জন্য ভিজিট করুন ঃ www.army.mill.bd

আইএসপিআর/সেনা/১৯৯

লেঃ কর্ণেল
অধিনায়ক
৭ সিগন্যাল ব্যাটালিয়ন

GD-453

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Establishing Green Belt at Bhasan Char and Reforestation of Rohingya Affected Areas in Cox's Bazar (HELP) Project
Office of the Divisional Forest Office
Coastal Forest Division, Noakhali.

Memo No. 22.7500.579.29.001.26.783 Date: 02.03.2026

E-Tender Notice

E-Tender is invited in the National e-GP System Portal(http://www.eprocure.gov.bd) for the Procurement of the following package's Tender:

Tender and Retender ID No.	Package No.	Description	Publication Date and Time	Last Selling Date and Time	Closing and opening Date & Time
Tender ID No.: **1230620**	**CFDN/EGBBC/2025-2026/GD-06**	Supply of Materials (T-shirt, Cap, Bag, pen, folder etc) for 01 to 20 batches for Forest, Wildlife and Biodiversity Conservation related Awareness Campaign for Forcibly Displaced Myanmar Nationals (FDMN) and local stakeholders living in Bhasan Char areas	**03-Mar-2026 15:00**	**15-Mar-2026 17:00**	**16-Mar-2026 15:00**

This is an online Tender, where only e-Tender will be accepted in the National e-GP Portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted. To submit e-Tender registration in the National e-GP system portal (http://www.eprocure.gov.bd) is Required.

Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP system portal and from e-GP help desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd , 16575, +8809677016575)

02.03.26
(Molla Mohammad Mizanur Rahman)
ID NO.13233
Divisional Forest Officer
Coastal Forest Division, Noakhali.
Phone:02-334491106
Email: bhasanchar2425@gmail.com.

GD- 461

GOVERNMENT OF THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF BANGLADESH
OFFICE OF THE DIVISIONAL ENGINEER-3,
BANGLADESH RAILWAY, DHAKA.

Memo No.54.01.0000.209.02.006.2025-26- 35 **Date: 01/03/2026.**

e-Re-Tender Notice (Open Tendering Method)

e-Tenders are invited in the national e-GP portal for following Procurement. Interested tenderers are requested to visit http://www.eprocure.gov.bd website for details.

Sl. No.	Tender ID, Ref. No. & Package No.	Name of works	Last Selling Date and Time	Tender Publishing & Closing Date & Time
1.	**Tender ID- 1146461, Ref. DEN-3/DA/egp22 /2025-26/3.106.5-Re-Tender-4**	**At Shahjahanpur Railway Officer's colony, Dhaka: Through repairs to quarter No. D/16-B, D/1-H (Occupant change) =02 Units including tiles, plaster work, sanitary work, sewerage line, plastic paint, mosquito net with Thai Alumunium frame and with related other ancillary works under SAE/WORKS/COLONY's Jurisdiction.**	**15-Mar-2026 17:00**	**03-Mar-2026 12:00:00 , 16-Mar-2026 12:00:00**
2.	**Tender ID- 1155538, Ref. DEN-3/DA/egp5 /2024-25/3.106.13_Re-Tender**	**At Shahjahanpur Railway Colony, Dhaka: Through repairs to quarter No. D/8-C, F, D/10-D =03 Units including tiles, plaster work, sanitary work, sewerage line repair, replacement of wooden window & ventilator, providing window with thai & grill, painting work, mosquito net and other related other ancillary works under SSAE/WORKS/COLONY's Jurisdiction.**	**15-Mar-2026 17:00**	**03-Mar-2026 12:00:00 , 16-Mar-2026 12:00:00**

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.

All Tenderers are requested to register in e-GP.

এস (২৬)(১৯৭)

01.03.26
(Md. Abrar Hossain)
Divisional Engineer/3
Bangladesh Railway, Dhaka.

GD-469

A guide to navigating the workplace in Ramadan

MAISHA ISLAM MONAMEE

In Bangladesh, Ramadan reshapes not only personal routines but also institutional rhythms. Office hours adjust, traffic patterns shift, and workplace energy follows a different arc across the day. Yet professional expectations continue. Deadlines remain intact, responsibilities persist, and performance standards hold steady.

However, instead of approaching Ramadan as a period of diminished productivity, it may be more constructive to treat it like a phase of recalibration. Fasting heightens awareness of energy, focus, and emotional regulation. When approached strategically, this heightened awareness can refine work habits rather than disrupt them.

STRUCTURE WORK AROUND COGNITIVE PEAKS

Fasting alters your patterns of alertness and concentration in ways that are subtle but measurable. You may notice that your thinking feels sharper during mid-morning hours, when your mind is clear, and distractions are limited, while late afternoons require more conscious effort to sustain focus. Rather than following the exact task structure you maintained before Ramadan, you should deliberately align demanding assignments with your strongest cognitive window.

Analytical writing, financial reviews, strategic planning, and sensitive correspondence deserve the hours when your reasoning is precise and your judgment steady. As your energy gradually tapers, shift to structured but less cognitively intensive responsibilities such as documentation, scheduling, routine coordination, and status updates. This sequencing makes sure you are doing the right work at the right time, without exhausting yourself. You could also plan the next day's priorities before you leave the office, to reduce the mental friction of early-morning decision-making.

PRIORITISE OUTCOME-BASED PERFORMANCE

During Ramadan, maintaining long hours at your desk can feel more demanding than usual, even when your responsibilities remain unchanged. In this context, you should shift your focus from appearing occupied to producing clearly measurable results. At the beginning of each week, define your priority deliverables, confirm deadlines, and align expectations with your supervisor and colleagues.

You may find that shorter, highly concentrated periods of work generate stronger outcomes than extended stretches of unfocused activity. When tasks are clearly scoped, you are less likely to overwork minor assignments or spend unnecessary time refining details that do not materially affect results. As many organisations operate on adjusted schedules during Ramadan, disciplined prioritisation distinguishes you as reliable and self-directed.

SAFEGUARD SLEEP AND PHYSICAL STABILITY

The altered schedule of sehri, taraweeh, and evening commitments compresses your rest cycles in ways that are easy to underestimate. If you do not plan intentionally, cumulative fatigue can gradually affect your concentration, professional tone, and quality of judgment. During this period, you should treat sleep as a strategic resource rather than a personal luxury. Your cognitive sharpness the next morning is directly linked to how deliberately you structure the hours after iftar.

Establishing a consistent routine that prioritises hydration, balanced nutrition, and a defined bedtime is key. While occasional late-night obligations may be unavoidable, regularly extending work into the early hours can erode focus over time. Protecting your rest strengthens sustainable performance and physical stability, and also shapes how colleagues perceive you. Slower responses, irritability, or diminished attention often reflect exhaustion rather than capability.

ILLUSTRATION: ZARIF FAIAZ

MAINTAIN DELIBERATE AND MEASURED COMMUNICATION

Fasting can heighten your emotional awareness, making you more sensitive to tone, pacing, and interpersonal dynamics at work. In high-pressure settings, the way you communicate often leaves a stronger impression than the volume of tasks you complete. During Ramadan, you should be especially deliberate about how you frame messages and respond to tension. Draft complex emails when your mind is clearest, and review them before sending to ensure that brevity does not come across as abruptness.

Precision in language prevents unnecessary misunderstandings. In meetings, aim for concise contributions supported by a clear structure. Summarise key points and confirm next steps to not only improve alignment but also conserve collective mental energy. When disagreements surface, it is often more constructive to recommend a brief follow-up discussion rather than extend debate in the moment.

Ramadan offers a disciplined environment in which to refine measured communication. Colleagues tend to value calm clarity, particularly during slower afternoon hours. By maintaining composure and thoughtful restraint, you reinforce perceptions of maturity and emerging leadership capacity.

STREAMLINE MEETINGS AND COLLABORATIVE PROCESSES

With everyone fasting, prolonged or loosely structured meetings can become disproportionately draining. During Ramadan, you should be attentive not only to what is discussed, but to how discussions are organised. Concise agendas circulated in advance allow you and your colleagues to prepare mentally rather than process information reactively. When objectives are clearly defined, speaking turns are moderated, and action points are summarised at the conclusion, cognitive strain is significantly reduced. Where scheduling permits, advocate for high-engagement or decision-heavy conversations earlier in the day, when collective alertness is stronger.

You should also assess whether certain updates require a meeting at all; in many cases, a structured written brief or shared document may achieve the same outcome with less expenditure of energy. Ramadan often reveals inefficiencies that routine busyness conceals. By encouraging structured collaboration, you demonstrate consideration for shared stamina and operational clarity. Streamlined processes during this month do not reflect diminished ambition; rather, they signal disciplined thinking.

USE RAMADAN AS A PERIOD OF PROFESSIONAL REFLECTION

Beyond operational adjustments, Ramadan offers you a structured period for deliberate introspection. The slower physical rhythm created by fasting often sharpens mental perspective. You may find that, in the absence of constant stimulation, your assessment of work becomes more precise. This is an appropriate time to evaluate whether your current workload aligns with your strengths, whether your daily responsibilities build transferable skills, and whether your trajectory reflects your long-term ambitions. You should observe which tasks genuinely contribute to professional growth and which consistently drain energy without proportional return.

Recording these reflections, even briefly, creates a reference point for future conversations about role expansion, skill development, or strategic repositioning. When you articulate your direction with intention, motivation becomes steadier and resilience more sustainable. In this sense, the month becomes not merely a period to maintain output, but an opportunity to refine your professional compass.

In a setting where collective discipline defines the month, your conduct at work becomes part of that discipline. You are not simply managing deadlines while fasting; you are demonstrating judgment, restraint, and structural thinking under altered conditions. These qualities are noticed. Organisations remember professionals who remain steady when routines shift. When Ramadan concludes, the external schedule will normalise.

What should remain, however, is the sharper awareness you cultivated of your capacity, your limits, and your direction. Professional maturity is rarely formed during comfortable periods. It develops when you are required to operate thoughtfully despite constraint.

JOBS SPOTLIGHT

Plan International Bangladesh
Phase-in-Manager
Deadline: March 7
Eligibility:
- Bachelor's or Master's degree in Social Sciences, Development Studies, Public Administration, International Development, or a related field.

Minimum experience: 7 years

ActionAid Bangladesh
Associate Officer, Emergency Preparedness & Response (EPR)
Deadline: March 8
Eligibility:
- Bachelor's degree in Civil Engineering, Environmental Science, Disaster Management, Social Science, or related disciplines.

Minimum experience: 1-2 years

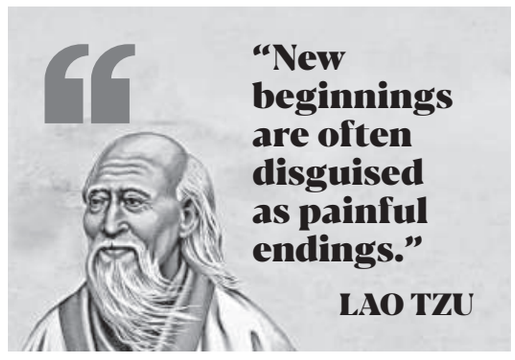
Labaid Pharmaceuticals Ltd.
Executive/ Sr. Executive (Supply Chain Management, Local Purchase)
Deadline: March 8
Eligibility:
- B.Pharm / M.Pharm, BBA/MBA from any reputed university.

Minimum experience: 1-2 years

Asset Developments & Holdings Ltd.
Project Engineer
Deadline: March 18
Eligibility:
- BSc in Civil Engineering or Diploma in Civil Engineering.

Minimum experience: 3-7 years (BSc)/ 5-9 years (Diploma)

FOR MORE DETAILS AND THE APPLICATION LINKS, SCAN THE QR CODE BELOW.



Zomato founder raises $54 million for new wearables startup

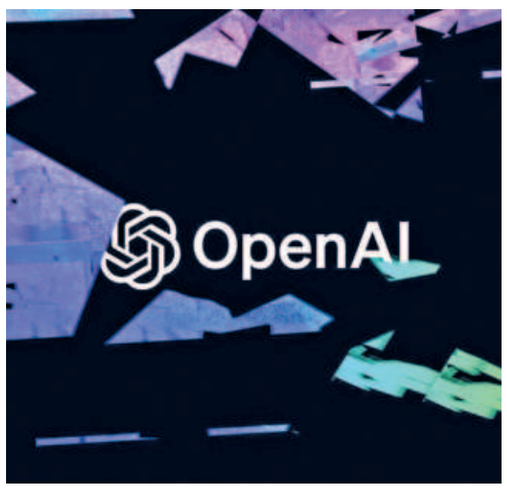
NEXT STEP DESK

Deepinder Goyal, the founder of India-based food delivery company Zomato, has raised $54 million in an initial funding round for his new wearable technology startup, Temple, at a post-money valuation of approximately $190 million. Goyal said in a social media post that the funding round was structured as a "friends-and-family" raise, with capital coming primarily from founder peers and early-stage investors in his network. He also noted that more than 30 Temple employees invested their own money at the same valuation, with no discount.

According to a report by Economic Times, regulatory filings show that investors in the round include Peak XV Partners, Steadview Capital, Dharana Capital, Info Edge Ventures, and more than 80 individual backers. Goyal stepped down as CEO of Eternal, the parent company of Zomato and Blinkit, in February and moved into a vice-chairman role, as per the ET report.

Temple is a wearable technology company that describes itself as focused on performance and precision monitoring. In a recent hiring post on X, Goyal stated that the core product is a performance-tracking wearable aimed at athletes, adding that the company is recruiting engineers across hardware, embedded systems, sensor design, and advanced software roles.

Amazon, Nvidia, and SoftBank back OpenAI with $110 bln investment



NEXT STEP DESK

OpenAI is raising $110 billion in a blockbuster funding round that would value the company at $840 billion. The round includes a $50 billion commitment from Amazon, $30 billion from SoftBank and $30 billion from Nvidia. The financing comes ahead of a widely anticipated initial public offering (IPO) of OpenAI expected later this year.

Amazon will initially invest $15 billion, with a further $35 billion to follow once certain conditions are met. As part of the agreement, OpenAI will use 2 gigawatts of computing capacity powered by Amazon's in-house Trainium chips. Amazon Web Services (AWS) will become the exclusive third-party cloud provider for OpenAI Frontier, the company's enterprise platform designed for building and managing AI agents.

The partnership does not alter OpenAI's existing arrangements with Microsoft. Microsoft's Azure platform will remain the exclusive cloud provider for OpenAI's application programming interfaces, which give developers access to its models.

AI will replace some jobs but create new ones, Amazon CEO says

NEXT STEP DESK

Amazon CEO Andy Jassy said that AI will reduce the need for human workers in certain roles but will also generate new categories of employment, as he addressed the technology's impact on the workforce during a recent CNBC interview. Speaking on CNBC's 'Squawk Box' following the announcement of Amazon's $50 billion investment in OpenAI, Jassy was asked about Jack Dorsey's plan to cut 40% of his staff due to AI productivity gains. He responded that AI represents "the most transformational technology shift that we've seen in our lifetime."

PHOTO: AMAZON

"I do believe that a lot of the jobs that we've thrown human beings at the last 20 or 30 years, you won't need as many human beings doing those same jobs," Jassy told CNBC's Andrew Ross Sorkin. "But I also think there will be other jobs created. And that has always happened in every technology shift."

In the interview, Jassy pointed to the emergence of cloud computing as a precedent, noting that "15 years ago, there was no such thing as a cloud solutions architect, and today there are tens of thousands, maybe 100,000 plus, of these types of jobs." "So we will have lots of new jobs, and there'll be some sort of transition, and we'll all work through it together," he added.

AI-powered insurance brokerage startup raises $46.8 million

Tushar Nair (left) and Dakotah Rice (right), co-founders of Harper. PHOTO: LINKEDIN

NEXT STEP DESK

Harper, an AI-based insurance brokerage startup, has raised $46.8 million in a combined Series A and seed funding round, the company recently announced. According to a report by TechCrunch on the matter, the round was led by Emergence Capital, with participation from Y Combinator, Lobster Capital, and Peak XV Partners. Harper participated in the YC Winter 2025 batch.

The company was founded by CEO Dakotah Rice and former Poolit CTO Tushar Nair. Rice previously founded investment company Poolit, which closed in 2023, as per TechCrunch. Launched in 2024, Harper describes itself as an AI-native commercial insurance agency. The platform matches small to mid-sized businesses with more than 160 insurance carriers for coverage, including workers' compensation, general liability, and professional liability. According to Rice, the company now serves more than 5,000 customers. The startup aims to automate traditionally manual processes, including submission routing, underwriter follow-ups, document collection, and pipeline management.

Star
DHAKA TUESDAY MARCH 3, 2026, FALGUN 18, 1432 BS
SPORT

What to WATCH

T SPORTS
Women's Asian Cup
DPR Korea vs Uzbekistan
Live from 8:00 am
China PR vs Bangladesh
Live from 2:00 pm
Bangladesh Cricket League
Final
Live from 4:00 pm

STAR SPORTS SELECT HD1, HD2
Premier League
Bournemouth vs Brentford
Live from 1:30 am (Wednesday)
Everton vs Burnley
Live from 1:30 am (Wednesday)
Wolves vs Liverpool
Live from 2:15 am (Wednesday)

PHOTO: BFF

DAVID MEETS GOLIATH
in Bangladesh's historic first

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh women's football team are set to embark on a landmark chapter in their sporting history today. Making their debut at the AFC Women's Asian Cup 2026, the tournament's 21st edition since its inception in 1975, the women in red and green face defending champions China at the 30,000-capacity Western Sydney Stadium in Australia.

The Group B fixture kicks off at 2:00 pm (Bangladesh time) and will be broadcast live on T-Sports.

For a nation that only started its women's football journey on the international stage in 2010 -- a year before the domestic league began -- qualifying for Asia's top-flight competition has been a monumental achievement. While several tournament rivals happped to be World Cup regulars with deep professional pool of players, Bangladesh have rapidly ascended to the continental stage against the overwhelming odds.

Their opening fixture is a true "David versus Goliath" encounter, as Bangladesh head coach Peter Butler said at the pre-match press conference yesterday. China, nine-time champions, currently sit 95 places ahead of Bangladesh in the FIFA rankings.

While the gulf in experience is vast, the goal for Bangladesh is clear: deliver a resilient performance to build momentum for upcoming group-stage matches against former champions and title aspirants North Korea and Uzbekistan.

Despite the daunting opposition and a squad where half the players average just 20 years of age, coach Butler is adamant that his side will not simply retreat into a defensive shell.

"This is a historic moment for Bangladesh," Butler told the media in Sydney. "While North Korea and Uzbekistan are strong, our immediate focus is China. We will have a game plan and play our way -- win, lose, or draw. We are not the type of team to 'park the bus', regardless of the opponent."

Bangladesh captain Afeida Khandaker said, "It is actually a privilege for us to play against a champion team like China. However, we will not step back from the fight just because they are a strong team."

Afeida and company carry the expectations of a nation of 170 million, but the Bangladesh captain said her team are aware of the expectations but remain unfazed by the occasion. "We represent our country, but we are not carrying any pressure."

"The people of Bangladesh can expect honest endeavor from us. We are an honest group; we might be small in stature, but the players have big hearts and want to do well for their country."
Bangladesh coach **Peter Butler**

Debutants Bangladesh are ranked 112nd while China, defending champions and record nine-time winners of this continental trophy, are ranked 17th in the world.

China are undefeated across their last 11 group stage matches at the AFC Women's Asian Cup, conceding just a single goal across those fixtures.

Bangladesh have become the 23rd different team to be represented at the AFC Women's Asian Cup.

China have scored an average of 4.9 goals per game at the AFC Women's Asian Cup, the most of any team in tournament history.

"Bangladesh are doing well with their style of play. You know, a team that will not have a lot of pressure on themselves will enjoy themselves. So, we're expecting a difficult game,"
China coach **Ante Milicic**

Saif turns page on T20 WC, eyes ODI WC

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh batter Saif Hassan wants to move on from the disappointment of missing out on the ongoing ICC T20 World Cup and focus on the upcoming ODI assignments, with qualification for the next year's ICC ODI World Cup still on the line.

Saif is currently taking part in the Bangladesh Cricket League (BCL) one-day tournament for Central Zone, who will face North Zone today in the final at Mirpur's Sher-e-Bangla National Cricket Stadium.

Saif and the national team players will then turn their attention to the three-match ODI series at home against Pakistan, beginning on March 11, which will kick off a busy period in 50-overs' cricket for the Tigers.

Bangladesh have 23 ODIs scheduled until March 31, 2027. To qualify directly for the 14-team World Cup, the Tigers must finish among the top eight Full Members in the ICC ODI rankings by that date. Full member hosts South Africa and Zimbabwe have already secured automatic qualification.

Saif, vice-captain of the T20I side, is still reeling from missing out on his maiden T20 World Cup after the Bangladesh team refused to travel to India over security concerns. But the 27-year-old claims he has now realigned his focus to the upcoming important assignments.

"Deep down, in our hearts, everyone is disappointed. There's no denying that. But I think as professional cricketers, it's very important for us to move on," Saif told reporters yesterday in Mirpur after Central Zone's practice session was washed out by rain.

"Since we're now heading into ODI cricket and there's an ODI World Cup ahead, the sooner we prepare ourselves for it, the better it will be," he added.

After being out of the reckoning for a few years, Saif seemingly revived his international career with some impactful knocks in the Asia Cup T20 last year.

His performance in T20Is earned him an ODI debut and he made a mark in Bangladesh's last ODI assignment -- a home series against West Indies in last October -- hitting a 72-ball 80 in the series-deciding third ODI to help Tigers seal the series 2-1.

"If you look at the last year or year and a half, I didn't really get many opportunities to play ODIs. We did play a few, but those were in between T20Is. So now, with the upcoming ODI series, preparation during these in-between periods have become even more important," he said.

Central Zone had beaten North Zone by two wickets in a high-scoring league phase match in Rajshahi on Saturday. The final will be a day-night affair and Saif is expecting another good encounter before the Pakistan series.

"Since we've reached the final, we have the opportunity to play one more match. It's very good preparation for us ahead of the ODI series. Hopefully, we can play even better cricket tomorrow [today]," he added.

Thousands of miles away from the war that started with the US-Israeli missile attack which killed their Supreme Religious Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei over the weekend, Iranian national women's football team played their opening match of the AFC Women's Asian Cup against South Korea in Gold Coast on Monday. The women in white lost the match 3-0, with the players looking dejected at the end of the match.

100 DAYS TO GO

The birth of the World Cup

The FIFA World Cup, now a global spectacle of sport and emotion, was born out of resistance and determination. In the early 20th century, football flourished under the Olympic banner but remained constrained by amateur rules and a lack of independence. The 1908 London Olympics, which limited participation to only national teams for the first time, strengthened football's identity. By the 1924 and 1928 Games, where it emerged as the main attraction, it was clear the sport had outgrown the Olympic stage.

French administrator and former FIFA president Jules Rimet envisioned a standalone global tournament, despite opposition from the International Olympic Committee. The turning point came when football was dropped from the 1932 Los Angeles Olympics, prompting FIFA to act.

Uruguay secured hosting rights for the inaugural 1930 tournament, offering to cover teams' expenses. Despite European reluctance, 13 teams competed in Montevideo, launching what would become football's greatest global event.

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

'Women's team needs exposure'

Since her appointment as a Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) director in November last year, renowned corporate figure *Rubaba Dowla* has been actively involved in several key areas of women's cricket. In an exclusive interview with *The Daily Star's Samsul Arefin Khan*, Rubaba shared her experience at the BCB so far, her vision for women's cricket and various challenges. Excerpts are given below:

The Daily Star (DS): How would you rate your time with the BCB so far?
Rubaba Dowla (RD): The last four months have been foundational. We have prioritised governance structure, formed structured committees, initiated the WBPL [Women's Bangladesh Premier League], developed clearer planning frameworks, and a defined roadmap for cricket development. I have received excellent support from the BCB team.

DS: What are your plans regarding the women's team's preparation for the ICC Women's T20 World Cup in June-July?
RD: We are working toward securing more international matches, and structured high-performance camps. After the WBPL, we have a home series with Sri Lanka and then a tri-series in Scotland. We chose Scotland because the conditions will be similar to England, where we will be playing in the World Cup.

DS: The women's team currently has an all-local coaching setup. Is there a plan to bring in foreign coaches?
RD: The women's team now needs exposure. While local coaches are showing results, we are looking into what is needed to better equip the players. We are looking for specific trainers for areas like batting and will make data-driven decisions to bring in the right support staff within a structured system.

DS: Are companies showing interest to own a team in WBPL?
RD: Several have shown interest, including owners of current men's BPL franchises. We are waiting for the EOI process to finish [on March 4] to finalise them.

DS: Men's BPL has been plagued by non-payment and integrity issues. How will the women's league handle these concerns?
RD: Credibility and financial capacity are our top criteria for selecting franchise owners. We are taking franchise fees and security deposits to ensure player payments, just like the men's BPL.

DS: Are foreign players showing interest?
RD: We are allowing minimum two and maximum three international players per team. We have already received direct emails and interest from players who want to know the schedule. Even some of them talked to our players as well.

DS: What initiatives are you planning to strengthen talent development?
RD: For the first time, we are starting a High Performance (HP) programme for the women's team. About 15-20 players will be there and it will start after the World Cup. We are also focusing on decentralisation, starting with a setup in Sylhet, and we plan to include girls' cricket at the school level.

DS: What do you think about the inquiry committee's report on Jahanara Alam's harassment allegations?
RD: This matter relates to incidents alleged to have occurred during 2021–22 period. When this current board received the complaint, we treated it with utmost seriousness and constituted an independent inquiry committee. Following its findings, the board reviewed the report and, where prima facie evidence was established in one of the complaints, we took action within our jurisdiction by banning the accused individual from cricketing activities under the BCB. Our priority has been to ensure accountability, uphold due process, and reinforce that player safety and dignity are our priorities..

DS: You are also chairing a new complaint committee. Have you received any complaints?
RD: Yes, we are handling few harassment cases now. We have already started working on some complaints. I am also initiating training on sexual harassment and policies for players, officials, and higher management.

DS: You joined the board as a nominee of the National Sports Council. With a new government in place, do you believe you will get to continue in this role?
RD: That decision rests with the appointing authority.

Bangladesh condemns Khamenei's killing

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh yesterday said it is saddened by the assassination of Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei in a targeted attack on Saturday.

This is a violation of international law and norms, the foreign ministry said in a statement yesterday.

Earlier on Sunday, Bangladesh also condemned the violation of the sovereignty of some countries in the region, including Bahrain, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and the UAE.

The safety of millions of Asian migrants, including some 7.5 million Bangladeshis, working in the Gulf region has become a concern for the migrant-sending countries.

Two Bangladeshi migrants -- one in Kuwait and another in the UAE -- were killed while at least seven others were injured by the impacts of attacks by Iran over the last two days.

"Bangladesh believes that conflict brings no solution and only dialogue,

SEE PAGE 8 COL 4

Solar-powered irrigation systems are being installed across different upazilas of Naogaon. Farmers are now using such renewable energy sources to draw water from underground sources to meet irrigation needs. The photo was taken yesterday in the Delwarbari area of Manda upazila, Naogaon.

PHOTO: AZAHAR UDDIN

Saifuzzaman's UK property financier collapses

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Market Financial Solutions (MFS), which provided financing for a massive £295 million property portfolio belonging to former Bangladeshi land minister Saifuzzaman Chowdhury, fell into administration last Wednesday, according to reports by The Financial Times (FT) and The Telegraph.

The crisis was triggered after lenders, including private credit firm Castlelake, identified irregularities following the back-to-back failures of US companies Tricolor Holdings and First Brands Group. These failures prompted intensified due diligence across the loan books of MFS.

Court applications citing the insolvency mentioned "real and serious concerns about mismanagement", "serious irregularities" in bank account management and a "significant shortfall" in collateral, the FT said.

MFS was a significant backer of property deals struck by Saifuzzaman. He, along with his family members, built a sprawling global property empire between 1992 and August 2024, when the Sheikh Hasina-led government was ousted following a mass uprising.

In June last year, the UK's National Crime Agency (NCA) froze 342 properties linked to Chowdhury, valued at approximately £185 million, as part of an ongoing civil investigation.

Legal filings and sources familiar with the matter indicate a shortfall in collateral backing loans to MFS entities of as much as £930 million. More than 25 separate

SEE PAGE 8 COL 1

IDRA, Sonali Bank, Sadharan Bima lose chiefs

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The financial sector yesterday saw three high-profile resignations across three key institutions, including the chief of the Insurance Development and Regulatory Authority (IDRA).

The development came less than a week after the government suddenly cancelled the contract of the Bangladesh Bank (BB) governor and appointed a new chief for the central bank.

In a letter to the secretary of the Financial Institutions Division, M Aslam Alam resigned from the position of IDRA chairman yesterday. He cited personal reasons.

Citing the same reasons, Jainul Bari, chairman of state-run Sadharan Bima Corporation, and Muslim Chowdhury, chairman of state-owned Sonali Bank, stepped down on the same day.

All three were appointed during the tenure of the Prof Muhammad Yunus-led interim administration.

Officials said the resignations come as the BNP-led government began to reshuffle top and important positions in the administration after it was sworn in on February 17.

On February 25, it cancelled the contract of Ahsan H Mansur, who was appointed as BB governor by the interim government in August 2024.

The government appointed Md Mostaqur Rahman, a professional accountant and businessman, as the new governor of the central bank.

IDRA's Aslam was appointed by the interim government in September 2024.

Saifunnahar Sumi, spokesperson for IDRA, said he had announced his decision to resign at a meeting nearly two weeks ago.

On the same day, Jainul Bari quit his position as chairman of the board of Sadharan Bima Corporation, the state-owned general insurer. Bari was a former chairman of IDRA, appointed during the Awami League regime.

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Security in diplomatic zone in city beefed up

Says home minister

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Security measures in the diplomatic zone, including around the US embassy, have been strengthened amid the ongoing global tensions, Home Minister Salahuddin Ahmed said yesterday.

He made the remarks during a courtesy call by US Ambassador Brent T Christensen at the former's office in the Secretariat, according to a ministry press release.

Salahuddin said BGB personnel have been deployed alongside regular forces to bolster security in the diplomatic area.

He added that law enforcement agencies have been instructed to take precautionary measures.

During the meeting, the two sides discussed law and order and security issues, illegal migration, counterterrorism cooperation, the Special Programme for Embassy Augmentation and Response (SPEAR) aimed at enhancing security in the diplomatic zone and implementation of the Electronic Nationality Verification (ENV), among

SEE PAGE 8 COL 1

FEARS OF PROLONGED WAR IN ME

Oil surges, stocks slide, dollar rallies

REUTERS

Oil prices surged, the dollar jumped and shares slid yesterday as military conflict in the Middle East looked set to last for weeks, threatening to upend a global economic recovery and perhaps reignite inflation.

Brent jumped around 10 percent to $79.90 a barrel, though it had briefly topped $82 at one stage, while the US crude climbed 8.2 percent to $72.64 per barrel. Safe-haven gold rose 2.6 percent to $5,413 an ounce.

Israel launched new air strikes targeting Tehran and expanded its military campaign to include attacks on Iran-backed Hezbollah militants in Lebanon on Monday, as US President Donald Trump signalled the US-Israeli military assault on Iranian targets could continue for weeks.

Meanwhile, Iran's state media said a new wave of missiles was being launched from central parts of Iran towards "enemy locations".

All eyes were on the Strait of Hormuz, through which around a fifth of the world's seaborne oil trade flows and 20 percent of its liquefied natural gas.

While the vital waterway has not yet been blocked, marine tracking sites showed tankers piling up on either side of the strait, wary of attack or maybe unable to get insurance for the voyage.

"At least in the short term, the disruption to global energy supply is substantial, (and) this clearly adds upside risks to the oil price," said Michael Langham, emerging markets economist at Aberdeen Investments.

However, "a global oil price shock is not the intention of the Trump administration ahead of US mid-term elections in November", he added.

A prolonged spike in oil prices would risk reigniting inflationary pressures globally, while also acting as a tax on business and consumers that could dampen demand.

Opec+ did agree to a modest oil output boost of 206,000 barrels per day for April on Sunday, but a lot of that product still has to get out of the Middle East by tanker.

Meanwhile, stock markets around the world tumbled. Europe's broad STOXX 600 slid 1.7 percent, after Asia Pacific ex Japan shares had fallen 1.8 percent US S&P 500 futures were down 1.5 percent.

Energy stocks were big gainers, however, up 4 percent in Europe to a new record high with energy giants BP and Shell each nearly 6 percent higher, while European defence stocks also gained 1.3 percent.

The energy moves were also relevant for currency markets given the US is a net energy exporter while both Europe and Japan rely heavily on imports.

Brent briefly spiked almost 14 percent and West Texas Intermediate nearly 12 percent at the start of business.

In the Middle East, the UAE and Kuwait temporarily closed their stock markets citing "exceptional circumstances".

And Chinese blue-chips were a rare gainer, up 0.4 percent though the country does get much of its seaborne oil imports from the Middle East.

In currency markets, the euro and pound were each down around 1 percent at $1.1704 and $1.3347 respectively.

The dollar was by far the biggest gainer, rallying even on safe havens such as the Swiss franc and Japanese yen. It climbed 0.6 percent on the Japanese yen and 0.5 percent on the Swiss franc to 157 yen and 0.7733 francs.

"The dollar's correlation to risk is back," said Jordan Rochester, head of fixed income and currency strategy EMEA at Mizuho.

Nurul Islam named chief whip of 13th parliament

Six BNP MPs appointed whips

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh Nationalist Party MP Nurul Islam from Barguna-2 has been appointed chief whip for the 13th parliament.

Other BNP lawmakers -- Md GK Gaus from Habiganj-3, Rakibul Islam from Khulna-3, Mia Nuruddin Ahmed Apu from Shariatpur-3, Ruhul Quddus Talukdar Dulu from Natore-2, Akteruzzman Mia from Dinajpur-4 and ABM Ashrafuddin from Lakshmipur-2 -- have been appointed whips.

Two separate gazette notifications were issued in this regard, appointing the

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Rijksmuseum discovers new Rembrandt

AFP, *Amsterdam*

The Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam said yesterday it had uncovered a new painting by Rembrandt, using advanced scanning technology and stylistic analysis to confirm it was crafted by the Dutch master.

The whereabouts of the 1633 work, entitled "Vision of

Zacharias in the Temple" was unknown for 65 years but was recently handed over to the museum for testing.

"Materials analysis, stylistic and thematic similarities, alterations made by Rembrandt, and the overall quality of the painting all support the conclusion that this painting is a genuine work by Rembrandt van Rijn," the museum said in a statement.

OFF TO THE MARKET

Farmers in Sylhet set out at dawn with boats loaded with fresh produce from villages and head towards the city. By bypassing middlemen and selling directly to consumers, growers are receiving fair prices, while city dwellers are happy to get fresh vegetables at lower rates. Farmers say they will continue bringing vegetables by river to designated city docks throughout the holy month of Ramadan. The photo was taken recently near Tuker Bazar in Sylhet city.

PHOTO: SHEIKH NASIR

Bad loans fall by Tk 87,298cr in three months

B1

HASANAH ISLAMI BANKING البنكية الاسلامي
Prime Bank

PRAYER TIMING
MARCH 3

	Fazr	Zohr	Asr	Maghrib	Esha
AZAN	5-06	12-45	4-30	6-04	7-30
JAMAAT	5-16	1-15	4-45	6-14	8-00

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

SEHRI, IFTAR TIMING

RAMADAN	MAR	SEHRI	IFTAR
13	3		6:04
14	4	5:02	6:04
15	5	5:01	6:05