



A craftsman hand-paints vibrant floral designs on a cream-coloured saree at a store inside the New Market in Dhaka, a popular Eid shopping destination. Depending on the design, each saree is selling for around Tk 1,500 to Tk 6,000. The photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED



## 'Forgive me if we don't meet again'

Father recounts son's final call before his killing in July uprising

SHARIFUL ISLAM and SIRAJUL ISLAM RUBEL

A father broke down before the International Crimes Tribunal-2 yesterday as he recounted his final phone call with his 22-year-old son, Osman Patwari, who sought forgiveness before joining the July uprising in Lakshmipur and said they might never meet again.

Dr Md Abdur Rahman said Osman, a fourth-year student of Chattogram Polytechnic Institute, was at their Lakshmipur home when protests demanding quota reforms spread across the country.

"At around 9:00am on August 4, 2024, my son called and said, 'Abbu, I am going to join the protest today. We may not meet again. Please forgive me,'" Rahman told the tribunal.

Rahman, a village doctor from Raipur in Lakshmipur, testified as the seventh prosecution witness in a crimes against humanity case over atrocities during the July uprising against Obaidul Quader and six other Awami League leaders and affiliates.

Rahman said he was in Dhaka when Osman called. He asked his son not to go, warning that the situation was dangerous, but Osman did not listen.

After the call, Rahman phoned his wife, Rehana Akter, and asked why she had allowed their son to leave.

She told him Osman had hugged her, kissed her forehead, and asked her to recite Ayatul Kursi and pray that Allah accepts him as a martyr.

## PM to launch 'Farmer Card' on Pahela Baishakh

STAR REPORT

Prime Minister Tarique Rahman is expected to formally launch the Farmer Card programme on April 14, marking Pahela Baishakh – the beginning of Bangla New Year 1433, officials said yesterday.

The decision was taken at a review meeting held at the Cabinet Division at the Secretariat in the capital, with the prime minister in the chair.

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## Govt to compile list of extortionists

Says home minister

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Home Minister Salahuddin Ahmed yesterday said the government will soon start compiling a list of extortionists, beginning in Dhaka, and take steps to bring them under the law.

While briefing reporters after visiting the Dhaka Metropolitan Police (DMP) headquarters, he said he spoke with senior police officers as well as officials from 50 police stations in this regard.

Salahuddin said improving the law and order situation, restoring public confidence, and establishing the rule of law are the government's top priorities, and that the police have a key role to play.

Referring to the previous period, he said the police, like



other institutions, were harmed under what he described as a "fascist" system, and that the government wants to rebuild public trust so that people see police as their friend.

He said he found police officials "determined" and ready to make sacrifices for the country, adding that wrongdoings committed by "some people" under a "fascist regime" had brought blame on the institution as a whole.

Salahuddin said the government wants an institutional system where everyone works within rules and responsibilities, so that no individual-centric system develops.

"There will be no personal,

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## 'Public hospitals will be free of brokers'

Health minister announces nationwide drive

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Health Minister Sardar Sakhawat Hossain yesterday announced a nationwide campaign to eliminate brokers from government hospitals.

Speaking during a visit to Dhaka Medical College Hospital, the minister said no "dalal (broker) syndicate" would be permitted to operate within public facilities.

"This system will be completely closed down and permanently sealed. Patients must receive services directly from hospital staff, with clear guidelines, visible help desks, and accountable officials in



place," he said.

The minister warned that hospital authorities would face administrative action if brokers were found working on their premises.

Law enforcement agencies are expected to carry out regular operations, particularly at large tertiary hospitals in Dhaka and other major cities, where complaints of broker activity are common.

He added that digital systems are being strengthened to reduce manual processes, which he said create opportunities for corruption and irregularities.

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## Man sent to jail in Sitakunda child murder

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

A Chattogram court yesterday sent the accused in the killing of a seven-year-old girl in Sitakunda to jail after recording his confessional statement under Section 164 of the Code of Criminal Procedure.

Judicial Magistrate-2 Saima Arefin Hema recorded the statement of the accused, Babu Sheikh, 50, after Sitakunda police produced him before the court in connection with the murder and attempted rape case of Jannatun Nayema Ira.

Additional Superintendent of Police (Sitakunda Circle) Sakila Sultana Suchana confirmed the development to The Daily Star.

Police arrested Babu yesterday after the girl died at Chattogram Medical College Hospital (CMCH), where she was undergoing treatment.



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PHOTO: STAR

Speakers at a seminar, titled 'Time for Change: Engaging Youth to Transform Unpaid Care Norms', organised by Manusher Jonno Foundation at Dhaka University's Muzaffar Ahmed Chowdhury Auditorium yesterday.

## Time poverty holding women, economy back

Say speakers at MJF seminar

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh's economic growth is being slowed down by a "time poverty crisis", with women contributing nearly five to seven times more hours than men on unpaid care and domestic work, experts and policymakers said at a seminar yesterday.

Citing the data of the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS) Time Use Survey 2022, they said despite this massive contribution, women's work remains largely unrecognised, limiting their participation in the formal workforce.

The seminar, titled "Time for Change: Engaging Youth to Transform Unpaid Care Norms", was organised by Manusher Jonno Foundation (MJF) at Dhaka University's Muzaffar Ahmed Chowdhury Auditorium, targeting university students to challenge entrenched gender norms.

Chairing and moderating the opening

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## 'My bank info made public with malintent'

Alleges Asif Mahmud

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

National Citizen Party (NCP) Spokesperson Asif Mahmud yesterday alleged that the Bangladesh Financial Intelligence Unit (BFIO) made his confidential bank information public in an official journalists' group with "malicious intentions" to assassinate his character.

He made the allegation at a press briefing at the party's office in Banglamotor yesterday.

Asif claimed that after he announced his candidacy for the Dhaka South City Corporation mayoral election, certain media outlets began spreading "propaganda" against him.

He said BFIO had sought bank account information of 56 individuals, including him, on Tuesday and that the data was confidentially sent to the agency by banks. However, he alleged that BFIO later shared his bank statement separately with a group of journalists.

"This has destroyed citizens' privacy," he said. "Distributing my bank statement separately instead of sharing information on all 56 individuals shows a malicious purpose beyond investigation."

The former interim government adviser said he had already



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## ICT-1 defers verdict in the Rampura case

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The International Crimes Tribunal-1 yesterday postponed its verdict in a crimes against humanity case involving the killing of two people and the shooting of two others in Rampura during the July 2024 uprising.

The delay followed a prosecution request to submit additional video evidence.

The tribunal had earlier scheduled yesterday for delivering the judgement after concluding witness testimonies and arguments from the defence and prosecution.

Speaking to journalists after the hearing, Chief Prosecutor Aminul Islam said the prosecution had found a video showing accused Chanchal Chandra Sarkar, a former assistant sub-inspector of Rampura police outpost, making an extrajudicial confession. In it, Sarkar

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