



The rising stakes of COOLING

TAGABUN TAHARIM TITUN

The sweltering heat of the Bangladeshi summer has historically been a seasonal challenge, but in recent years, it has transformed into a primary driver for one of the country's most dynamic consumer electronics sectors. Once considered a luxury reserved for the elite,

the air conditioner (AC) has rapidly transitioned into an essential household appliance for the middle class. Driven by rising urban temperatures, increasing disposable income, and a robust local manufacturing ecosystem, the AC market in Bangladesh is currently undergoing a significant technological and structural shift.

SEE PAGE J2

ILLUSTRATION: ZARIF FAIAZ



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BANGLADESH'S CHOICE

GREE

AIRY Air Conditioner NEW





No Direct Airflow



Long-distance Air Supply



G-AI Inverter

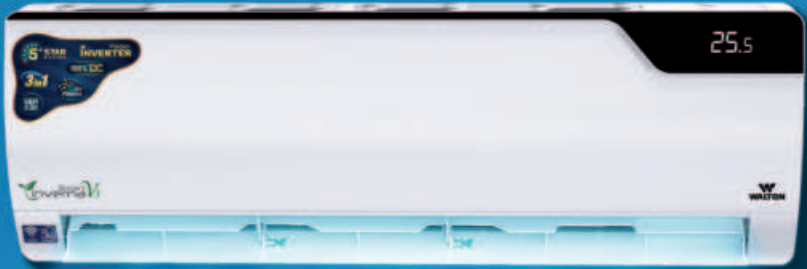


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CROSSWALK 2026



BACK TO BACK
AC BRAND

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WALTON

Air Conditioner



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ECO FRIENDLY
R32



SMART
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Air Plasma
Technology



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INVERTER
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All models are tested by:
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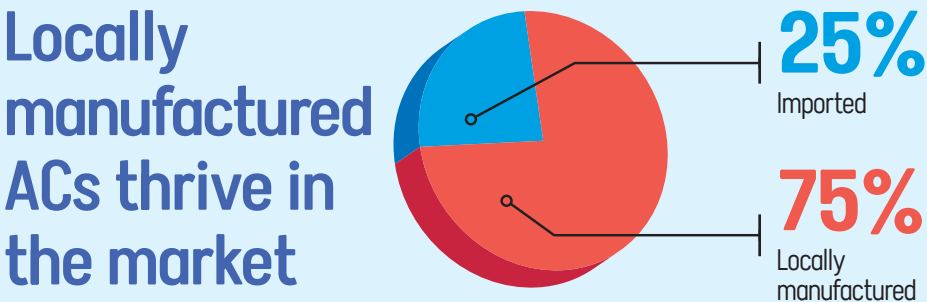
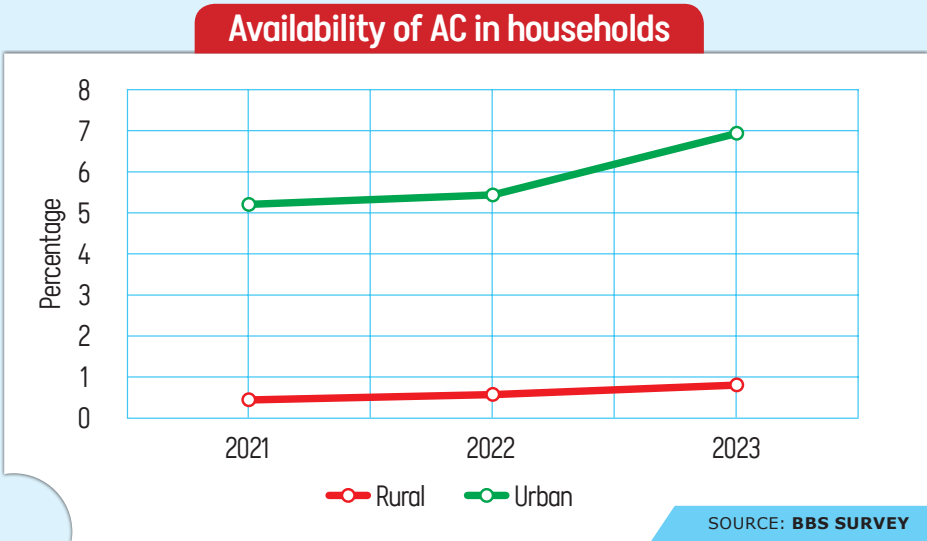
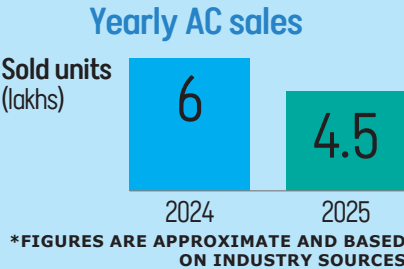
The rising stakes of cooling

AC INDUSTRY OVERVIEW

○ 2.28% of households now have AC, compared to 1.6% in 2021
○ Yearly demand for ACs was generally between 600,000 and 700,000 units before 2025

“Current import policies allow importers to pay only 1% tariff while local manufacturers pay 15% tariff and 15% VAT on raw materials, harming industrialisation and employment.”

-Md. Tanvir Rahman
Chief Business Officer, Walton



FROM PAGE J1

A MARKET GAINING MOMENTUM

The trajectory of the AC market reflects the broader economic growth of Bangladesh. According to data from the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS) highlighted in recent reports, the penetration of ACs in households has seen a remarkable jump. A 2022-2023 survey revealed that the proportion of households using refrigerators and ACs has grown significantly as incomes rise. Specifically, AC usage, which stood at a mere 0.4% in 2013, has expanded to nearly 4.5% in 2023.

In terms of production, the “Made in Bangladesh” tag has become a dominant force. In 2023, local manufacturers and assemblers met nearly 80-90% of the domestic demand, a stark contrast

to a decade ago when the market was almost entirely import-dependent. However, the journey hasn’t been without its cooling-off periods. But, last year saw a temporary dip in demand. Unprecedented rainfall and relatively mild temperatures during the peak summer months led to a “cooling off” of sales, with many retailers reporting stocks remaining on shelves longer than anticipated. However, 1-tonne unit now costs Tk 60,000 to Tk 65,000, up from Tk 50,000-Tk 55,000 a year ago, while in order to get premium brands one needs to count Tk 1.2 lakh. Despite this weather-induced fluctuation, the long-term outlook remains transparent, with annual demand estimated between 500,000 to 600,000 units in a standard year.

THE INVERTER EFFICIENCY EDGE

As electricity prices undergo periodic adjustments, the Bangladeshi consumer has become increasingly “energy-conscious.” This shift has pushed inverter technology from being a premium feature to a market standard. The primary appeal of inverter ACs lies in their ability to regulate compressor speed based on the room’s cooling requirements, rather than the “all-or-nothing” approach of non-inverter models.

According to technical insights from industry leaders like Haier, inverter technology can lead to substantial cost savings. By avoiding the high energy spikes associated with frequently starting and stopping the compressor, these units can reduce electricity

consumption by up to 60% to 70% compared to traditional fixed speed units. Over a three-to-five-year period, the savings on utility bills often exceed the initial price difference between an inverter and a non-inverter model.

Md Tanvir Rahman, Chief Business Officer at Walton, emphasises that while the future is undoubtedly inverter-driven, the market still maintains a niche for traditional models. “Inverter technology has quickly become the preferred choice due to its superior energy efficiency and long-term cost savings,” says Rahman. “However, non-inverter air conditioners still have a place in the Bangladeshi market, particularly in specific commercial or temporary use scenarios. Small retail shops, temporary workspaces, and certain institutional environments often prioritise lower upfront investment rather than long-term electricity savings. That said, the overall market trend clearly indicates that inverter technology will dominate the market in the coming years.”

AI-POWERED SMART COOLING

Beyond energy savings, the new frontier for the AC market in Bangladesh is Artificial Intelligence (AI) and health-centric features. As consumers spend more time indoors, the demand for “Smart ACs” that offer more than just cold air is rising.

Electromart, the marketer of the globally renowned Gree brand, has recently introduced features that take personalisation to a new level. The launch of the Gree ‘Airy’ inverter AC series marks a shift toward AI-driven climate control. Md. Nurul Afsar, Deputy Managing Director of Electro Mart group explained that this series integrates AI-driven sensors that analyze room temperature, humidity levels, and occupancy patterns to optimise compressor performance automatically. This intelligence translates directly into the wallet; customers can expect an additional 10-15% energy savings compared to conventional inverter models by reducing unnecessary compressor loads.

Moreover, in a post-pandemic world, air quality has become a non-negotiable feature. The Airy series features a “Cold Plasma” sterilisation system. This technology helps neutralise airborne bacteria, viruses, and allergens by breaking down harmful particles at a molecular level. “In densely populated urban environments with dust and pollution concerns, this feature significantly improves indoor air quality,” Afsar noted. Laboratory testing

has shown that the system eliminates up to 93% of bacteria and viruses, making it a critical addition for households focused on health and hygiene.

POLICY HURDLES AND GROWTH

While the consumer side of the market is flourishing with smart tech, the manufacturing side faces structural challenges that could dictate the future of local industrialisation. Bangladeshi manufacturers have proven they can produce world-class appliances, but they are now calling for a more level playing field in terms of taxation and tariffs.

Walton, a pioneer in local AC manufacturing, has pointed out a significant discrepancy in the current policy framework. Md. Tanvir Rahman highlighted that while the government encourages local production, certain tariff structures favor importers of heavy industrial cooling systems over local makers.

“There are policy barriers for local manufacturers which need to fix urgently,” he stated. “For example, importers can import VRF (Variable Refrigerant Flow) and Chiller paying only 1% customs tariff while manufacturers have to pay 15% customs tariff and additional 15% VAT on raw materials. This is heavily affecting local industrialization and employment along with raising the import cost.”

Addressing these disparities is crucial for the next phase of the industry’s growth. The transition from home cooling to large-scale industrial and commercial cooling solutions. If the tariff barriers are addressed, local manufacturers believe they can significantly reduce the country’s reliance on imported heavy machinery, further boosting the economy and creating high-skill jobs.

The Bangladeshi AC market is at a crossroads of innovation and policy evolution. With the rise of AI-integrated and smart features, the massive energy savings offered by inverter technology, and a growing consumer base, the industry is poised for long-term expansion. However, the stability of this growth will depend on how well the industry navigates weather-related volatility and whether the government provides the necessary policy support to protect and promote local manufacturing. For the consumer, the message is clear: the modern AC is no longer just a box that blows cold air rather it is a smart, health-tracking, energy-saving investment for a more comfortable future.



MD. TANVIR RAHMAN
Chief Business Officer
WALTON AIR CONDITIONER



At Walton, we are seeing consumers becoming more proactive. Instead of waiting for peak heatwaves, many customers are now purchasing ACs ahead of the summer season. This shift in consumer behavior has encouraged manufacturers to strengthen production planning, improve distribution coverage, and ensure sufficient inventory before the peak demand period begins.

AC market trends and future of COOLING

Walton

The days of panic-buying an AC during a heatwave are fading as more Bangladeshis shift toward proactive, pre-season purchasing. Md. Tanvir Rahman, Chief Business Officer of Walton Air Conditioner, discusses how this change in consumer habits is reshaping production planning and the industry’s 2026 growth outlook.

The Daily Star (TDS): With temperatures hitting record highs, how has the demand forecast for 2026 changed?

Md. Tanvir Rahman (MTR): Bangladesh has been experiencing increasingly intense and prolonged summers, and this shift is having a noticeable impact on the AC market. For 2026, the demand forecast has been revised upward compared to earlier projections. Air conditioning is gradually transitioning from a luxury product to an essential household appliance.

TDS: Almost all new models focus on inverter technology. Is there still a future for non-inverter ACs in the Bangladeshi market?

MTR: Inverter technology has quickly become the preferred choice due to its superior energy efficiency and long-term cost savings. However, non-inverter air conditioners still have a place in the Bangladeshi market, particularly in specific commercial or temporary use scenarios. They often prioritise lower upfront investment rather than long-term electricity savings. In such cases, non-inverter models remain a practical option.

TDS: How are “Smart ACs” performing in terms of sales? Do consumers actually use the mobile app features?

MTR: Smart air conditioners equipped with IoT and Wi-Fi connectivity are gradually

gaining popularity in Bangladesh. Initially, many consumers perceived these features as premium add-ons. However, as smart home technology becomes more familiar, users are increasingly appreciating the practical benefits.

Younger consumers and tech-savvy families are actively using mobile applications to control their AC remotely, schedule cooling times, and monitor energy usage. At Walton, we have noticed a steady increase in interest in smart-enabled models, especially among urban homeowners.

TDS: Are you seeing an increase in AC sales from outside Dhaka and Chattogram?

MTR: Expansion of AC sales beyond major metropolitan cities is one of the most encouraging trends in the market. However, rural and semi-urban markets present unique challenges like, voltage fluctuations and infrastructure limitations. To address these challenges, Walton is focusing on wider distribution coverage, accessible after-sales service, and continuous consumer education across the country.

TDS: How is the industry managing rising costs of imported raw materials amid dollar fluctuations?

MTR: To counter dollar fluctuations and rising costs, Walton prioritises localization. However, policy imbalances—1% tariffs on imports versus 15% customs tariff and 15% VAT on raw materials—stifle domestic industrialisation and employment.

Interview conducted by Adrin Sarwar

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10 smart habits for a cheaper summer

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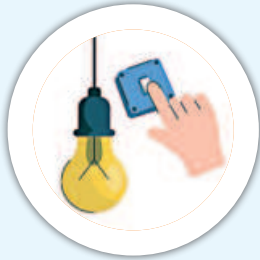
Find the sweet spot
Setting your AC between 24 and 26°C ensures the best balance between energy efficiency and a cool environment.



Opt for energy-smart units
Choosing an inverter AC can slash your power consumption up to 60% because the motor adjusts its speed intelligently while cooling the air.



Activate eco-mode
Use your remote’s ‘eco’ or ‘power saving’ button to let the compressor work more efficiently once the room reaches the desired temperature.



Clear the heat path
Switch off heat-emitting appliances like lightbulbs or computers that force your AC to work overtime.



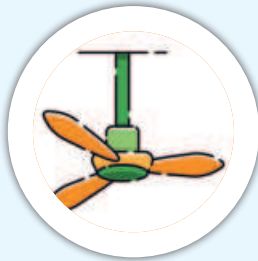
Utilise natural ventilation first
Open windows to let trapped hot air escape before turning on the AC to help the room cool down much faster.



Maintain your machine
Scheduling a professional tune-up ensures the internal coils and gas levels are optimised for peak performance and lower consumption.



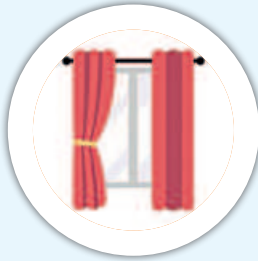
Keep the outdoors clear
Make sure the external compressor unit is free of debris and has plenty of space for better heat exchange.



Sync with a ceiling fan
Running a fan on low speed helps disperse cold air evenly, allowing you to raise the AC temperature without feeling the heat.



Stop the cold escape
Ensure all windows and doors are tightly sealed so the cool air doesn’t leak out and force the motor to run constantly.



Dim the lights and blinds
Keeping curtains closed during the peak afternoon hours blocks thermal energy from the sun, keeping your indoor space naturally cooler.



MHM FAIROZ,
Managing
Director & CEO,
SINGER
BANGLADESH
LIMITED



“Smart features are moving beyond “gimmick” status and becoming part of mainstream expectations in premium segments”

CHANGING CLIMATE drives higher demand Singer Bangladesh

As rising temperatures and changing weather patterns continue to influence consumer behaviour in Bangladesh, demand for air conditioners is evolving rapidly. MHM Fairoz, MD and CEO of Singer Bangladesh Limited shares that manufacturers and distributors are closely monitoring both climate trends and shifting customer expectations as they prepare for the 2026 summer season.

The Daily Star (TDS): With temperatures hitting record highs, how has the demand forecast for 2026 changed?

MHM Fairoz (MHMF): our demand forecast for 2026 has increased compared to earlier projections. We anticipate double-digit growth in the residential AC segment. The market is also seeing earlier seasonal demand, with customers purchasing ACs before peak summer months to avoid supply shortages and price hikes. However, current 2026 weather projections suggest no major heatwave is expected. Though, changing lifestyle preferences continue to support steady growth in AC demand.

TDS: Almost all new models focus on Inverter tech. Is there still a future for non-inverter ACs in the Bangladeshi market?

MHMF: While inverter ACs now dominate new model launches due to their superior energy efficiency and lower electricity bills, non-inverter ACs still maintain a limited presence in the market. In price-sensitive segments and certain commercial applications—such as small retail shops, temporary installations, or spaces with short operational hours—non-inverter models remain relevant due to their lower upfront cost. However, the overall market share of non-inverter ACs

is gradually declining because the price gap between inverter and non-inverter models has significantly reduced in recent years.

TDS: How are “Smart ACs” (IoT/ Wi-Fi enabled) performing in terms of sales? Do consumers actually use the mobile app features or is it still seen as a “gimmick”?

MHMF: Smart ACs with Wi-Fi and IoT capabilities are gradually gaining traction. Sales of smart-enabled models have increased steadily, particularly among urban middle- and upper-income consumers. Initially, many customers perceived app control as a novelty feature. However, usage data and feedback suggest growing adoption of practical functionalities such as remote on/off control, temperature scheduling, and energy monitoring. The ability to switch on the AC before reaching home or track electricity consumption via mobile apps is proving especially appealing.

TDS: Is there a viable roadmap for affordable Solar-Hybrid ACs in Bangladesh to reduce the pressure on the national power grid?

MHMF: Given the increasing pressure on the national power grid, solar-hybrid ACs represent a promising future direction. However, affordability remains the key constraint. While technically feasible, the initial setup cost—including panels, inverters, and battery systems—can be prohibitive for mass adoption. Over time, as solar equipment costs decline and policy support strengthens, solar-hybrid ACs could become a meaningful solution for Bangladesh.

Interview conducted by Farhan Musfique.

Strategic maintenance can save AC (and your wallet)

ADRIN SARWAR

When summer heat arrives, a working air conditioner is essential. However, many people forget about their AC until it stops working or the energy bill skyrockets. Regular maintenance is the secret to a cool home and low costs. Here is a simple guide on what you can do yourself and when you need to call an expert.

WHAT YOU CAN DO
Maintenance doesn’t always require a toolbox of specialised sensors. Much of what keeps an air conditioner “breathing” properly is simple hygiene and vigilance.

CHANGE THE FILTERS
If you do nothing else, change your filters. It is the single most effective way to ensure efficiency. A clean filter restores airflow and can lower cooling costs by 5% to 15%. Check them every 30 to 60 days—more often if you have pets.

KEEP THE COILS CLEAN
Your AC has two main sets of coils: the evaporator (inside) and the condenser (outside). These get dirty over time. Dirty coils act as insulation, blocking heat transfer and reducing efficiency. To keep them working, change indoor filters regularly and clear any debris within two feet of the outdoor unit so it has enough “breathing room” to release heat.

STRAIGHTEN THE FINS
The aluminium fins on your coils are delicate. They bend easily, blocking airflow and reducing efficiency. Use an inexpensive “fin comb” to straighten them yourself—no professional needed.

WHEN TO CALL THE EXPERTS
While homeowners can handle basic cleaning, an AC is a complex machine. Once a year, usually in the spring, it is vital to hire a licensed professional for a full service.

THE REFRIGERANT REALITY
It is a myth that AC units need to

be “topped off” like a car needs gas. An AC system is sealed; if refrigerant is low, you have a leak. A professional won’t just add more; they will find and repair the leak using specialized equipment to safely capture the gas instead of venting it into the air.

MECHANICAL AND ELECTRICAL PRECISION
A pro looks where you can’t. They check for burned electrical contacts, tighten loose connections, and measure motor voltage. They also verify your thermostat’s accuracy. If it is miscalibrated, your system may run longer than necessary, wearing out the compressor prematurely.

DO THE DUCTWORK
Even the most efficient AC is wasted if your ducts leak into the attic or walls. A professional can perform a leakage test and seal those gaps, ensuring that all the air you pay to cool actually reaches your living space.

AC maintenance is a partnership. By changing filters and clearing debris, you provide the daily care the system needs. An annual professional tune-up provides the deeper check-up that prevents total breakdowns. Don’t wait for a heatwave to find out your system is struggling. A little maintenance today ensures your home remains a cool, cost-effective sanctuary all summer.



How air conditioning protects from air pollution

ADRIAN SARWAR

As of 2024, more than 55% of the world's population lives in urban areas, which is expected to rise to nearly 70% by 2050. While cities are hubs of innovation and economy, they are also epicentres of concentrated air pollution. Between vehicle emissions, industrial runoff, and the "Urban Heat Island" effect, city dwellers are constantly exposed to a "toxic soup" of atmospheric pollutants. In this context, air conditioning (AC) has evolved. No longer merely a tool for thermal comfort, modern HVAC (Heating, Ventilation, and Air Conditioning) systems have become the primary line of defence in maintaining public health.

FILTRATION OF PARTICULATE MATTER

AC improves urban air quality by filtering harmful particles like PM2.5 and PM10. Standard residential filters (MERV 8-11) catch dust and pollen, while high-grade versions (MERV 13-16) trap bacteria and smog. Constant air circulation through these filters ensures indoor air stays significantly cleaner than the polluted street air.

The next generation of urban AC is intelligent. We are seeing the integration of: HEPA and UV-C Light: Systems that use ultraviolet light to kill airborne viruses and bacteria, a technology that gained massive traction post-COVID-19.

A SEALED ENVELOPE
One of the greatest risks to urban health is infiltration. In high-traffic cities, outdoor air often contains high levels of nitrogen dioxide and ground-level ozone. When a building utilises air conditioning, it creates a "sealed envelope." AC seals your home by keeping windows closed, blocking exhaust and soot. Advanced systems also use positive pressure to push air

out of cracks, preventing unfiltered outdoor pollutants from leaking in.

CONTROLLING HUMIDITY AND MOULD

High humidity in cities breeds mould and dust mites. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), indoor dampness and mould are major triggers for asthma and chronic



ILLUSTRATION: ADRIAN SARWAR

obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD). Air conditioners act as large-scale dehumidifiers. By stripping excess moisture from the air, they keep indoor humidity levels between the "healthy zone" of 30% to 50%, effectively neutralising biological pollutants before they can colonise.

MITIGATION OF VOC

Off-Gassing Cities are full of synthetic materials—paints, treated woods, plastics, and carpets. These materials release Volatile Organic Compounds (VOCs). Heat speeds up the release of toxic VOCs from synthetic materials. By maintaining cool, stable temperatures, AC slows this "off-gassing." Advanced units also use activated carbon filters to chemically remove these toxins and odors from the air.

URBAN HEAT ISLAND PARADOX

The relationship between AC and air quality is complex. The Urban Heat

Island (UHI) effect makes cities 5–15°C warmer than rural areas as concrete absorbs heat. AC units worsen this by dumping indoor heat onto streets, creating a feedback loop where rising heat increases smog, making cooling even more essential for survival. To combat this, urban planners are adopting District Cooling Systems—

centralised plants that cool entire neighborhoods more efficiently than individual units.

SMART SENSING AND PURIFICATION

The next generation of urban AC is intelligent. We are seeing the integration of: HEPA and UV-C Light: Systems that use ultraviolet light to kill airborne viruses and bacteria, a technology that gained massive traction post-COVID-19. Modern units can now detect high levels of CO2 or PM2.5 and automatically increase ventilation or filtration rates.

In modern cities, the AC has evolved from a luxury into vital health infrastructure. Despite energy challenges, its ability to filter particles, control humidity, and block urban toxins is indispensable. For the urban dweller, the AC isn't just cooling the room; it is cleaning the very air they breathe.



MD. NURUL AFSER
Deputy Managing Director
ELECTRO MART GROUP



Nearly 45% of our sales come from district and semi-urban areas. To overcome rural challenges like voltage instability and low awareness, we are leveraging government power initiatives and our extensive network—5,000+ technicians, 2,000+ dealers, 70+ showrooms, and digital media—to drive growth.

HEATWAVES, RURAL DEMAND boost AC sales

Electro Mart Group

Record-breaking heatwaves over the past two years have fundamentally altered the consumer landscape in Bangladesh. Air conditioners have turned from high-end luxuries into essential household appliances. In this interview, Md. Nurul Afser, Deputy Managing Director of Electro Mart Group, discusses the projected 20% demand surge for 2026 and how the industry is evolving through AI-driven efficiency and a massive expansion into district towns.

The Daily Star(TDS): With temperatures hitting record highs, how has the demand forecast for 2026 changed?

Md. Nurul Afser(MNA): The prolonged heatwaves over the past two years have structurally shifted the AC market in Bangladesh. For 2026, we are projecting a 15-20% increase in overall demand compared to earlier forecasts. Air conditioners are no longer viewed as luxury items but as essential home appliances, particularly among middle-income households, along with rural and semi-urban areas.

TDS: Almost all new models focus on inverter technology. Is there still a future for non-inverter ACs in Bangladesh?

MNA: Inverter technology now accounts for over 80% of new AC sales. However, non-inverter units will not disappear entirely. There remains a niche market in small retail shops, offices,

first-time buyer and certain commercial applications where usage hours are limited and upfront cost sensitivity is high.

TDS: What challenges do local manufacturers face in transitioning to R32 refrigerant?

MNA: R32 is more environmentally friendly with a lower Global Warming Potential (GWP). Additionally, dependence on imported components and fluctuations in the US dollar increase cost pressures. However, from a sustainability perspective, the transition is both necessary and inevitable.

TDS: As you launch the Gree 'Airy' inverter AC series, how does AI personalise cooling?

MNA: The new Gree 'Airy' inverter series integrates AI-driven sensors that analyse room temperature, humidity levels, and occupancy patterns to optimise compressor performance automatically. Compared to conventional inverter models, customers can expect an additional 10-15% energy savings. The system reduces unnecessary compressor load while maintaining stable and comfortable cooling. It features WiFi & Bluetooth connectivity, voice control and an advanced Cold Plasma sterilisation system that eliminates 93% of bacteria and viruses, keeping your home environment clean and healthy.

Interview conducted by Adrin Sarwar

বিকাশ

ইদ লাগছে মনে

বিকাশ পেমেণ্ট সবখানে

ইলেকট্রনিক্সে

৳ ১২০০ পর্যন্ত অফার*

নির্দিষ্ট আউটলেটে ন্যূনতম ৳১০,০০০ বিকাশ পেমেণ্টে 'D6' কোড দিলেই ৳২০০ ডিসকাউন্ট এবং ২% করে ৳১,০০০ পর্যন্ত ক্যাশব্যাক

SAMSUNG electra

electromart

EERNA

Gadget & Gear

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Magnifico Mar 2026



Israel running critically low on interceptors

P5



A risky moment to liberalise capital exit

P6



Will we waste a generational opportunity?

P7



Zico ignored as Ishaque gets first call-up

P11

Iran, US snub negotiation to end war

Trump's Hormuz plan meets with cautious response from allies as Iran warns against 'wider war'

AGENCIES

The United States and Iran yesterday rejected talks to end the war, as Tehran warned other countries against getting involved after President Donald Trump urged world powers to send warships to escort oil tankers through the Strait of Hormuz.

On the ground, the war continued with warring parties launching waves of strikes against each other, killing and wounding dozens.

In an interview with CBS's "Face the Nation", Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi said Iran was not interested in talks with the US, pushing back on Trump's stance that Tehran wants a deal to end the war.

"We have never asked for a ceasefire, and we have never asked even for negotiations," Araqchi said. "We are ready to defend ourselves for as long as it takes."

"We are stable and strong enough. We are only defending our people," said Araghchi. "We don't see any reason why we should talk with Americans, because we were talking with them when they decided to attack us."

Trump on Saturday said Iran wanted a deal, but that he was not prepared to make one on current terms, without giving further details.

Trump says negotiation terms 'not good enough'	Tehran says country strong, can outlast foes	Hormuz open for all, except foes: Iran
Iran Guards vow to 'pursue and kill' Netanyahu	'Gulf allowing US to launch attacks on Iran'	US energy secy predicts quick end to Iran war

He said he might, again, bomb targets on Iran's oil hub, Kharg Island, "just for fun".

"Iran wants to make a deal, and I don't want to make it because the terms aren't good enough yet," Trump told NBC News.

With crude oil prices hovering around \$100 a barrel, Trump administration officials later insisted that all signs point to a relatively quick end to the conflict.

"This conflict will certainly come to an end in the next few weeks -- could be sooner than that ... and we'll see a rebound in supplies and a pushing down of prices after that," US Energy Secretary Chris Wright told ABC's "This Week" program.

Earlier, the Iranian FM said Iran was ready to talk to countries that want to negotiate the passage of selected oil tankers through the key Strait of Hormuz export route.

On Friday, Araghchi told US media that the strait, which usually accounts for 20 per cent of global oil and gas exports, remained open to international shipping except for vessels from the US, Israel, and their allies.

"The Strait of Hormuz is open. It is only closed to the tankers and ships belonging to our enemies, to those who are attacking us and their allies. Others are free to pass," he said.

Tehran also sent a stern message to its Arab neighbours, telling them that the Islamic republic has what its foreign minister called "ample evidence" that US bases on their territories were being used to launch attacks.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1



Bangladesh pacer Taskin Ahmed celebrates with teammates after dismissing Salman Agha, left, who hit a brilliant 106 off 98 balls but could not take Pakistan over the line, as the hosts won the third and final ODI by 11 runs to seal the three-match series 2-1 at the Sher-e-Bangla National Cricket Stadium in Mirpur yesterday. Earlier, Bangladesh opener Tanzid Tamim laid the platform for the win with a run-a-ball 107.

PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED

Govt, opposition MPs spar over reform council

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The opposition in parliament yesterday raised concerns over the delay in convening the Constitution Reform Council, while the treasury bench maintained that the president cannot summon a council session as the body has no constitutional existence.

The debate unfolded during an unscheduled discussion in the House on the final day of the deadline for President Mohammed Shahabuddin to convene the session, as stipulated in the July charter implementation order.

As the second sitting of the first parliamentary session begun at 11:00am, Leader of the Opposition and Jamaat-e-Islami Ameer Shahiqur Rahman stood up to raise the issue. Speaker Hafiz Uddin Ahmad said the opposition leader would be given the floor after the question-and-answer session.

Following the Q&A session, the speaker gave the floor to Shahiqur.

The opposition leader said this parliament, formed in the backdrop of the July uprising, did not come through a normal electoral process but through a presidential order issued on November 13, 2025.

Reading out a portion of the July National Charter (Constitution Reform) Implementation Order, 2025, he noted that under the order, a session of the Constitution Reform Council was to be convened within 30 days of the election results being published, following the same procedure used to convene the first session of parliament.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

Caretaker govt system restored automatically

Will take effect only after tenure of current parliament, says SC

ASHUTOSH SARKAR

The Supreme Court has observed that the system of a non-party caretaker government (NPCG), led by the most recently retired chief justice, has automatically been restored in the constitution.

However, the system will come into effect only after the tenure of the current 13th parliament, according to the full text of the verdict uploaded to the Supreme Court's website yesterday.

The observation was made in the 74-page full verdict by a seven-member Appellate Division bench headed by the then chief justice, Syed Refaat Ahmed. The bench unanimously delivered the ruling after allowing two separate appeals and four review

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

Why new US trade weapon a threat to Bangladesh

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A new trade storm is gathering in Washington, and Bangladesh is directly in its path.

On March 11, the United States launched a sweeping investigation into 16 countries, from industrial giants like China and the European Union to developing exporters such as Bangladesh and Cambodia.

The official accusation? These countries are artificially propping up their industries, creating a "structural overcapacity" (essentially, making way too many products) that hurts American factories.

NEWS ANALYSIS

To understand why the US is suddenly targeting Bangladeshi export subsidies and even cement factories, we need to look at the calendar. Recently, the US Supreme Court struck down the legal tool the White House had been using to impose punitive tariffs on other countries. Then the Trump administration turned to a temporary measure to impose those tariffs, currently set at 10 percent globally. That measure will expire on July 27, which is why the US government revived an old legal tool known as Section 301 of the Trade Act of 1974. This

SEE PAGE 2 COL 5



Residents walk past the rubble of buildings hit by an airstrike in Tehran yesterday. Inset, a woman picks up belongings inside a house that was damaged by a strike in Tehran. Iran yesterday warned countries against getting involved in its war with the United States and Israel, after President Donald Trump urged world powers to escort oil tankers through the Strait of Hormuz choke-point in the Gulf.

PHOTO: REUTERS

ঢাকা দক্ষিণ সিটি কর্পোরেশন

নগর ভবন, ৫, ফিনিক্স রোড, রমনা, ঢাকা

মশক নিয়ন্ত্রণে প্রয়োজন জনগণের অংশগ্রহণ

নিয়মিত প্রতিদিন জমা পানি ফেলে দিন

গণবিজ্ঞপ্তি

পবিত্র ঈদ-উল ফিতরের ছুটিতে যাওয়ার আগে করণীয়

- মশার বিস্তার রোধঃ** বাসার ছাদ, ফ্রিজের ট্রে, বারান্দার ফুলের টব, খালি পাত্র, কেঁটা বা গাড়ির টায়ারে যেন কোথাও পানি জমে না থাকে নিশ্চিত করুন। বাথরুমের কমোডের ঢাকনা অবশ্যই ঢেকে রাখুন। এই সময়ে বৃষ্টির-কারণে রান্নাঘর, বারান্দা বা অন্য কোথাও যদি পানি জমার সম্ভাবনা থাকে, সে জায়গাগুলো চিহ্নিত করে ব্যবস্থা নিন।
- বিদ্যুৎ সংযোগঃ** বাসার বৈদ্যুতিক বাতি, ফ্যান, কম্পিউটার, মাইক্রোওয়েভ ওভেন, ওয়াশিং মেশিনসহ সকল বৈদ্যুতিক যন্ত্রপাতির সুইচ বন্ধ নিশ্চিত করুন।
- গ্যাসের সংযোগঃ** গ্যাস সিলিন্ডার বা গ্যাসের চুলা বন্ধ আছে কি না নিশ্চিত করুন। বাড়ি থেকে ফিরে এসে চুলা জ্বালানোর আগে বাসার দরজা-জানালা খুলে দিন যাতে বাসার ভেতরের গ্যাস জমে থাকলেও বের হয়ে যায়।
- নিরাপত্তা নিশ্চিতকরণঃ** বাসা বা ব্যবসা প্রতিষ্ঠানের প্রধান দরজা, জানালা, বারান্দা এবং পেছনের দরজাগুলো তালাবদ্ধ করুন এবং নিরাপত্তা নিশ্চিত করুন।
- পোষা প্রাণী ও গাছের যত্নঃ** আপনার পোষা প্রাণী ও গাছের সুরক্ষায় প্রয়োজনীয় ব্যবস্থা নিশ্চিত করুন।

প্রিয় নগরবাসী,
আপনার ঈদ যাত্রা শুভ ও নিরাপদ হোক- এই কামনায়

ঈদ মোবারক

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প্রশাসক
ঢাকা দক্ষিণ সিটি কর্পোরেশন

ডিএসসিসি/পিআরডি/২০০/২০২৫-২০২৬

GD-612

JU student found dead in her home

Husband detained

JU CORRESPONDENT

The body of a female student of Jahangirnagar University was recovered yesterday from her home in Savar's Islamnagar area, adjacent to the campus.

Deceased Sharmin Jahan was a student of the 51st batch of the Public Administration Department, said JU Proctor AKM Rashidul Alam.

Sharmin's husband Fahim Al Hasan told neighbours that he returned home in the afternoon and found the door locked from the outside. He said he later entered the house and found his wife lying on the floor in a bloodied state.

Later, with the help of his landlord, Sharmin was taken to Enam Medical College Hospital in Savar, where doctors declared her dead, added Fahim.

The body was later taken to Shaheed Suhrawardy Medical College in Dhaka for an autopsy, said Rubel Howlader, officer-in-charge of Ashulia Police Station.

SEE PAGE 8 COL 3



STARLINK ON TRAINS... A passenger on the Bonolota Express scans a QR code to access free onboard Wi-Fi, made possible for the first time through Starlink -- a satellite-based internet service provider. Bangladesh Railway launched the service experimentally on March 13 in collaboration with Bangladesh Satellite Company.

PHOTO: ORCHID CHAKMA

Two die minutes after pre-surgery injection

Families accuse nurses of negligence; SBMCH suspends 2 nurses

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Barishal

Two patients died following alleged negligence by on-duty nurses at Sher-e-Bangla Medical College Hospital in Barishal yesterday.

The deceased are Helena Begum, 45, wife of the late Babul Hawlader of Sarsi village in Barishal, and Shefali Begum, 60, wife of Mannan Talukder from Dalbuganj village in Kalapara, Patuakhali.

The incident occurred around 8:30am at the female ward of ENT department, on the third floor of the hospital.

Relatives of the deceased said they would seek legal action over the deaths.

Hospital administration sources and family members said Helena was admitted on February 23 for thyroid complications, while Shefali was admitted on March 8 for a surgery to remove a tumour in her mouth.

Speaking to reporters, Helena's relative Monir alleged that the patient was scheduled to undergo surgery at around 8:30am yesterday.

However, around 7:00am, a nurse administered

SEE PAGE 5 COL 4

Iran, US snub negotiation

FROM PAGE 1

As Washington has brushed aside attempts by Middle Eastern allies to open talks, three sources told Reuters, and Iran's Revolutionary Guards said on Sunday they had fired more missiles at Israel and three US bases in the region, including Saudi Arabia's Al-Khari.

"This war will end when we are certain that it will not be repeated and that reparations will be paid," Araghchi yesterday told Arabic-language news platform Al-Araby Al-Jadeed.

Trump responded by urging "China, France, Japan, South Korea, the UK and others" to send warships to escort tankers, while the US military continues to pound drone, boat and missile launch sites in Iran on the north shore.

But the countries he listed have given only guarded responses, and Araghchi, in a call with French

counterpart Jean-Noel Barrot, warned them to "refrain from any action that could lead to escalation and expansion of the conflict".

The UK defence ministry was non-committal, saying "we are currently discussing with our allies and partners a range of options to ensure the security of shipping in the region".

Britain's minister for energy security, Ed Miliband, told the BBC the "plan now has to be to de-escalate the conflict... We are talking to our allies. There are different ways in which we can make maritime shipping possible."

South Korea said it was monitoring Trump's remarks on social media, while the policy chief of Japan's ruling party, Takayuki Kobayashi, said the bar for sending Japanese navy ships to the region under existing laws was "extremely high".

Global oil prices have surged by

40 percent as Iran has choked off the vital sea passage and attacked energy and shipping industry targets in its Gulf neighbours.

The strikes were in retaliation for the US and Israeli air campaign that killed its supreme leader, triggering a war across the Middle East.

Meanwhile, Iran's Revolutionary Guards yesterday vowed to target Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu.

"If this child-killing criminal is alive, we will continue to pursue and kill him with full force," said the Guards on their website Sepah News.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky on Saturday claimed that Russia was supplying Iran with Shahed drones to use against the US and Israel.

Zelenskiy told CNN's Fareed Zakaria that it is "100% facts" that Iran has used Russian-made Shaheds to attack US bases.

As the war drags on, Israel

yesterday approved an \$827-million emergency budget allocation for military purchases, Israeli media reported.

Despite the hardline talk from all sides, residents of Tehran were able to go about their work week in the most normal atmosphere since the start of the war on February 28.

Traffic was busier than last week, and some cafes and restaurants had reopened. Some shoppers queued at ATMs to withdraw cash. It was a similar story outside the capital.

More than 1,200 people have been killed by US and Israeli strikes, according to Iranian health ministry figures that could not be independently verified.

The UN refugee agency says up to 3.2 million people have been displaced in Iran. The Pentagon says more than 15,000 targets in Iran have been hit by US and Israeli forces.

Why new US trade weapon

FROM PAGE 1

powerful law gives the US president massive leeway to punish other countries for "unfair" trade practices, and it doesn't require approval from Congress or the courts.

Dr Deborah Elms, head of trade policy at the Hinrich Foundation, explains that the US is keeping this investigation on a very short leash. "The USTR's goal is to replace these [expiring] tariffs with new measures by July," she wrote in an article on her organisation's website on March 12. Because they are in such a rush, the US government is throwing everything at the wall to see what sticks, accusing these 16 countries of a wild variety of offences just to justify new taxes.

Washington's use of Section 301 has mutated over the years. For decades after the World Trade Organization (WTO) was formed in 1995, Section 301 was mostly a bureaucratic stepping stone. The US government primarily used it to gather evidence before politely taking a formal trade dispute to the international WTO courts.

That polite era ended during the first Trump administration. Washington stopped asking the WTO for permission and turned Section 301 into a unilateral sledgehammer. The most famous example was the 2018 trade war, when the US bypassed global courts and slapped punishing tariffs -- ranging from 7.5 percent to 25 percent -- on \$370 billion worth of Chinese goods over intellectual property theft, according to the US Congress website. They also briefly used it to tax European goods in 2020 over a dispute involving airplane subsidies. When the Biden administration took over, it didn't put the weapon away. In May 2024, after a formal review, Biden not only kept those Trump-era China tariffs but actively spiked some of them (like jacking up taxes on Chinese electric vehicles).

Now, by scooping up 16 incredibly diverse economies -- lumping a vulnerable, developing garment hub like Bangladesh into the same regulatory basket as China, Germany, and India -- the US is breaking all historical precedents. Washington is no longer using Section 301 to fix specific, targeted trade violations; it is using it as a frantic, sweeping dragnet to replace the universal tariff revenue it just lost in the Supreme Court.

Stephen Lamar, the president of the American Apparel & Footwear Association, said that his group was discouraged by the proposed tariffs and that the administration should slow down and work with various stakeholders, including Congress, according to a New York Times report. He likened the process to the administration trying to "glue together shattered glass in a messy fix."

"We understand the administration is hurriedly trying to recreate the tariff rates it had sought to establish under a scheme now deemed illegal by the Supreme Court," he said. "In this effort, the process increasingly feels like answers in search of an investigation in search of answers."

However, in recent days, some commentators in Bangladesh have gone on social media to downplay the threat as a non-event. Their logic is: Because we are on a list with 15 other countries like China and India, we are safely hidden in the crowd. Don't panic and don't go into a frenzy. This is a dangerous mindset.

Simply put, Section 301 is not a group punishment. The US can use this law to slap high taxes directly on Bangladeshi exports. As Dr Elms warns, the current US administration "appears keen to retaliate first and discuss mostly later," and any penalties they apply "are likely to be long-lasting."

Govt, opposition MPs spar over reform council

FROM PAGE 1

"Today [yesterday] is the 30th calendar day since the publication of the results, but the session has not been convened. That is my concern."

He argued that the session of the Constitution Reform Council should also be convened on the prime minister's advice to the president, similar to a parliamentary session.

Under the July Charter Order, members of the 13th parliament are expected to perform dual roles -- as lawmakers and as members of a Constitution Reform Council tasked with addressing 48 constitutional provisions outlined in the July charter within 180 working days.

For this, MPs were required to take two separate oaths -- one as members of parliament and another as members of the council.

After Shafiqur's remarks, Speaker Hafiz Uddin said he expected a response from the ruling party.

Home Minister Salahuddin Ahmed then took the floor and explained that while the president can issue ordinances when parliament is not in session, constitutional amendments or changes cannot be made through such ordinances.

He further argued that the July National Charter Implementation

Order is neither an ordinance nor a law, but something in between, raising legal concerns over what he described as an imposed order.

"I am not denying anything. The people's verdict must be respected, but it has to be done constitutionally -- it has to be done legally. There is no place for emotion here. A state does not run on emotion. A state runs on the constitution, on law, on rules."

The home minister added that the president cannot convene a session of the Constitution Reform Council, as such a body does not exist under the constitution.

"Since the Constitution Reform Council does not exist, the prime minister cannot advise the president on it, and the president also cannot summon that session of the council; therefore, he did not convene it."

Salahuddin said opposition lawmakers had taken oaths as members of the Constitution Reform Council in an unconstitutional manner and were now demanding that the president convene its session.

He emphasised that while the people's mandates should be respected, reforms must be implemented through constitutionally recognised processes, and any constitutional change must be introduced and

passed through the proper legislative procedure.

Salahuddin said the current parliamentary session was required to settle 133 pending ordinances, making it difficult to immediately introduce a constitutional amendment bill.

However, he indicated that the issue could be taken up during the upcoming budget session, when the Business Advisory Committee may decide on forming a committee and placing a constitutional amendment bill before parliament.

The home minister said the government wants the full implementation of the July charter. "But whether the constitution can be amended through any imposed order outside the July National Charter, through any unlawful order, is a major legal and constitutional question. That too we should debate and discuss. We should discuss it in the Business Advisory Committee and bring forward a bill for constitutional amendment."

He said the bill will be adopted in this great house on the basis of consensus.

"We have followed the constitution till now and we will continue to do so."

Later, addressing Opposition Leader Shafiqur, Speaker Hafiz Uddin

Caretaker govt system

FROM PAGE 1

petitions filed against the 2011 verdict.

The appellants and petitioners are BNP and Jamaat-e-Islami; rights organisations Shushashoner Jonno Nagorik, and Human Rights Support Society; and freedom fighter Mofazzal Islam from Naogaon.

On November 20 last year, the apex court delivered a short verdict overturning its judgment that had scrapped the caretaker government system in May 2011. Then chief justice ABM Khairul Haque led the seven-member bench that declared the 13th Amendment to the constitution null and void by a majority view.

After the verdict was announced, the 15th amendment to the constitution was passed by the National Parliament on June 30, 2011, bringing several changes, including the abolition of the caretaker government system. A gazette notification was published to this effect on July 3, 2011.

The caretaker government system was introduced in 1996 through the 13th amendment, which aimed to safeguard democracy by ensuring free and fair elections under an NPCG that would remain in power for only 90 days.

The full text of the verdict said the caretaker government system cannot be applied while a parliament is still in place, nor can it be

applied retroactively to an interim government that began without it -- such as the one led by Prof Muhammad Yunus.

In the verdict, Chief Justice Syed Rezaat Ahmed, the author of the judgment, observed that although the NPCG mechanism stands automatically restored, such provisions cannot be activated immediately.

"Therefore, the restored provisions shall lie dormant until enabling circumstances as specified in the restored provisions themselves come into play," the verdict read.

Justice Md Ashfaqul Islam, a senior judge of the Appellate Division, agreed with the verdict.

He noted that the 13th amendment was passed in good faith under article 7 of the constitution. He added that the doctrine of necessity justified the caretaker government as a temporary safeguard for democracy, and that it preserved, rather than destroyed, the constitution's basic structure.

About the judgment of the then Chief Justice Khairul Haque, who signed the verdict 16 months after his retirement, Justice Ashfaqul said, "In the full text of the verdict, Chief Justice ABM Khairul Haque, the author of the majority decision, sought to anchor his reasoning upon an expanded and somewhat personalised interpretation of the 'basic structure', confining it to

a narrow vision of democracy and the rule of law.

"But this exposition, instead of preserving the constitution's spirit, distorted the framers' original intent. It unsettled the delicate constitutional balance that was meant to harmonise democratic governance with people's supremacy. The judgment, in essence, subverted the inbuilt dictum of the constitution that democracy derives legitimacy not merely from form, but from the people's effective participation in government through a transparent electoral process."

Contacted, SC lawyer and constitutional expert Barrister Imran Siddiq told this correspondent that there is no need to amend the constitution or enact a new law to give effect to the caretaker government, as the SC judgment states that the relevant provisions will be automatically restored.

"The restored provisions will remain dormant until the dissolution of the 13th parliament, since only a dissolution can trigger the NPCG provisions as stipulated under Articles 58B [1] and 58C [2].

"However, the apex court judgment does not bar parliament from amending the form of the caretaker government system without undermining or dismantling the mechanism."

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PHOTO: MEHEDI HASAN

Visitors from different generations browse books at a stall on the last day of the Amar Ekushey Book Fair yesterday at Dhaka's Suhrawardy Udyan. Although publishers reported disappointing turnout and sales this year, ardent bookworms still turned up in droves. The fair continues to draw readers of all ages, offering something for everyone.

'Largely ceremonial' book fair ends

Publishers lament low turnout, poor sales

DIPAN NANDY

The Amar Ekushey Book Fair — one of the most cherished cultural gatherings in the country — ended yesterday, leaving many publishers disappointed as they felt the event was more symbolic than successful this year.

Despite initial uncertainty over its organisation, the fair was eventually held. However, many in the publishing industry said it fell short of expectations.

Farid Ahmed of Somoy Prokashon said, "This year's fair felt largely ceremonial. We took part, and readers also came, but neither participation nor sales met our expectations. We hope lessons from this year will guide the planning of future fairs."

Mahbubur Rahman, CEO of Adarsha Prokashoni, said the industry must begin preparing early for the next edition.

"This year's fair has ended, but discussions about the future

should start now. We need to rethink how the fair can be organised more effectively when it coincides with Ramadan again," he said.

However, Mohammad Azam, director general of Bangla Academy, said the shape and timing of future fairs largely depend on publishers.

"We are only the organisers. The main stakeholders are the publishers. They will decide what the next fair should look like and when it should be held. Of course, the government's goodwill also plays an important role," he said.

Even on the final day, sales remained slow. During the daytime, most stalls saw few visitors as many avoided going out in the afternoon heat while fasting during Ramadan.

Dhaka University student Sadia Rahman said she felt compelled to attend despite her busy schedule.

"I came late this year, so I

Police to probe constable hiring from 2014-24

MOHAMMAD JAMIL KHAN

At least 70,000 police constables recruited between 2014 and 2024 are set to come under scrutiny as Bangladesh Police has ordered an investigation into alleged irregularities in recruitment during that period.

The decision was issued in an office order yesterday by Inspector General of Police Md Ali Hossain Fakir, directing district-level committees to probe allegations of corruption, rule violations, and other irregularities.

At least three senior officials at Police Headquarters confirmed the development to The Daily Star last night.

"At least eight to ten thousand constables are recruited in the force yearly. In that way, the number of recruited constables during the period is not less than 70,000," said a PHQ official, requesting anonymity.

According to the order, district-level committees headed by superintendents of police (SPs) will conduct the inquiry and submit their findings, along with opinions, to Police Headquarters by April 15, 2026.

Each committee will also include the additional superintendent of police (administration), DIO-1 (district intelligence officer), and ROI/RO-1

SEE PAGE 10 COL 1

Dust pollution worsens
air quality in Khulna

P4

'Coordinated campaign'
against unarmed civilians

P4

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১ টির মূল্যে ৪ টি

*শর্ত প্রযোজ্য

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- মাস্টারকার্ড ওয়ার্ল্ড ক্রেডিট কার্ড



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ASHULIA KILLINGS

‘Coordinated campaign’ against unarmed civilians

Says full verdict of ICT-2

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The full verdict of International Crimes Tribunal-2 has described a coordinated collapse of police command during the July uprising, accusing law enforcers of systematic killings, destruction of evidence and obstruction of justice.

The 591-page judgment, received by the prosecution yesterday, detailed how five people were killed and their bodies burned, while another victim was set on fire while still alive.

The three-member tribunal led by Md Nozrul Islam Chowdhury concluded that the atrocities were part of a “coordinated

and organised campaign” against unarmed civilians rather than isolated incidents.

On February 5, the tribunal convicted 16 political and law enforcement officials of crimes against humanity, saying the offences fell within the “rarest category of cases warranting the severest punishment”.

Six convicts – including Muhammad Saiful Islam and AFM Sayed Roni – were sentenced to death. Others given capital punishment are former SI Abdul Malek, former ASI Biswajit Saha, and Constables Mukul Chokder and Roni Bhuiyan.

The tribunal said anything less than the death penalty could undermine public

SEE PAGE 10 COL 5



গ্রামীণ ব্যাংক
প্রধান কার্যালয়
মিরপুর-২, ঢাকা-১২১৬।

সতর্কীকরণ বিজ্ঞপ্তি

তারিখ: ১৬/০৩/২০২৬ইং

এতদ্বারা সংশ্লিষ্ট সকলের অবগতির জন্য জানানো যাচ্ছে যে, সম্প্রতি কিছু ব্যক্তি/প্রতিষ্ঠান অনুমতি ব্যতিরেকে অবৈধভাবে গ্রামীণ ব্যাংকের নাম ও লোগো অথবা উহার সাদৃশ্য নাম ও লোগো ব্যবহার করে বিভিন্ন প্রিন্ট, ইলেকট্রনিক ও সামাজিক যোগাযোগ মাধ্যমে প্রচার, বিজ্ঞাপন, চিঠিপত্র ও অন্যান্য কার্যক্রম পরিচালনা করছে, যা সম্পূর্ণ বেআইনী এবং প্রতিষ্ঠানের সুনামের পরিপন্থী। গ্রামীণ ব্যাংক আইন, ২০১৩ (২০১৩ সনের ৫৬ নং আইন) এর ৩০(২) ধারা মোতাবেক ব্যাংকের লিখিত সম্মতি ব্যতীত কোন প্রসপেক্টাস বা বিজ্ঞাপনে ব্যাংকের নাম ব্যবহার করা দণ্ডনীয় অপরাধ। এছাড়া গ্রামীণ ব্যাংকের মনোহ্রাম বা লোগো কপিরাইট আইন, ২০২৩ এর আওতায় নিবন্ধিত।

অতএব, বিভিন্ন প্রিন্ট, ইলেকট্রনিক, সামাজিক যোগাযোগ মাধ্যম, প্রসপেক্টাস, বিজ্ঞাপন, চিঠিপত্র ও অন্যান্য কার্যক্রমে অসাধুভাবে গ্রামীণ ব্যাংকের নাম ও লোগো অথবা উহার সাদৃশ্য নাম ও লোগো ব্যবহার করা থেকে বিরত থাকার জন্য সর্বমহলকে জ্ঞাত করা যাচ্ছে।

আদেশক্রমে,
গ্রামীণ ব্যাংক কর্তৃপক্ষ।

Request for Quotation (RFQ) for Interior Fit-Out Works for BRAC Bank PLC.

BRAC Bank PLC. delivers a full array of banking services to individuals and businesses through a network of 194 Branches, 116 Sub-branches, 330 ATMs, 446 SME Unit Offices and 1,120 Agent Banking Outlets across the country. The bank is currently seeking potential vendor(s) to carry out **Interior Fit-Out Works** for its premises.

A Technical Request for Quotation (RFQ) is hereby issued for this purpose. The RFQ, along with details of the pre-bid meeting and the bidding process, can be found on the bank’s website: <https://www.bracbank.com/en/page/e-tender>

Interested eligible bidders are requested to submit their technical offers as per Instruction to Bidder (ITB) outlined in the bidding process.

**BRAC BANK**
অগ্রণী অফিস



INDEPENDENT UNIVERSITY, BANGLADESH (IUB)
VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

School of Engineering, Technology and Sciences
Department of Electrical and Electronic Engineering

- Assistant Professor
- Lecturer B

Department of Physical Sciences

- Assistant Professor (Physics)
- Assistant Professor (Mathematics)
- Lecturer B (Mathematics)

Application Deadline
Sunday, March 29, 2026



For detailed information and to apply, please visit: <http://iub.ac.bd/news-and-events/jobs-at-iub> or scan the QR code



রূপালী ব্যাংক পিএলসি
RUPALI BANK PLC
উত্তম সেবার নিশ্চয়তা
মাধাইয়া বাজার শাখা, কুমিল্লা

শাখা স্থানান্তর

রূপালী ব্যাংক পিএলসি'র মাধাইয়া বাজার শাখা, কুমিল্লা ১৫/০৩/২০২৬ রোজ রবিবার থেকে নতুন ঠিকানায় স্থানান্তরিত হয়ে ব্যাংকিং কার্যক্রম শুরু করছে।

পুরাতন ঠিকানা	নতুন ঠিকানা
রূপালী ব্যাংক পিএলসি মাধাইয়া বাজার শাখা সালাম উলুখ (২য় তলা) (কাঁচা বাজার সংলগ্ন) মাধাইয়া বাজার, চান্দিনা, কুমিল্লা।	রূপালী ব্যাংক পিএলসি মাধাইয়া বাজার শাখা সাহা সুপার মার্কেট (২য় তলা) (কাঁচা বাজার সংলগ্ন) মাধাইয়া বাজার, চান্দিনা, কুমিল্লা।

সম্মানিত গ্রাহক, পৃষ্ঠপোষক এবং শুভানুধ্যায়ীদের ব্যাংকিং সেবা গ্রহণের জন্য নতুন ঠিকানায় যোগাযোগের অনুরোধ করা যাচ্ছে।

Dust pollution worsens air quality in Khulna

DIPANKAR ROY, Khulna

Khulna has been witnessing a steady deterioration in air quality due to dust pollution, raising concerns among residents, environmentalists and public health experts.

While Dhaka has long been labelled one of the most polluted cities, recent data suggest that Khulna at times even surpasses the capital in hazardous air conditions.

Experts said the worsening air pollution is the result of a combination of factors, including nearby brick kilns, unpaved or damaged roads, unchecked construction activities and emissions from ageing vehicles.

According to Switzerland-based air quality monitoring organisation IQAir, Khulna recorded an Air Quality Index (AQI) of 279 at 10:00am on December 20, much higher than Dhaka's 202 at the same time. An AQI reading above 200 is considered very unhealthy, while levels exceeding 300 fall into the hazardous category.

Despite a plan supported by the World Health Organization to transform Khulna into a healthier urban environment by 2027, air quality remains alarmingly poor.



Tk 607 crore road development programme, a Tk 2,300-crore sewerage system project, a Tk 259 crore road widening project and additional development activities worth about Tk 650 crore by other agencies. Poor coordination and prolonged implementation, particularly during the dry season,

Development works under the Khulna City Corporation, Khulna Water Supply and Sewerage Authority and Khulna Development Authority have left large sections of city roads dug up for months, creating widespread dust pollution.

Major projects include a Tk 823-crore drainage initiative, a Mahfuzur Rahman Mukul, divisional coordinator of Bangladesh Environmental Lawyers Association, said institutional failures are turning Khulna into another pollution hotspot.

Dr Sujat Ahmed, deputy director of Khulna Medical University, said air pollution can trigger cough, asthma and respiratory infections, particularly among children and the elderly.

Executive Magistrate and Chief Waste Management Officer Kohinur Jahan of KCC said cleanliness drives are being carried out across the city. “Contractors have also been instructed to promptly remove soil and construction waste generated from public works,” she said.

She urged residents and developers to avoid dumping construction materials on roads.

Khandaker Md Fazlul Hoque, director of the Department of Environment in Khulna, said they have already discussed the matter with all relevant stakeholders.

“It is not possible for our department alone to control the situation. Although we are conducting regular drives and fining polluting institutions, fines alone cannot solve the problem.”

Queues still snake

FROM PAGE 12

“They have instructed us to ensure that no one misuses the new decision and that fuel is not wasted,” he said, adding that if people take fuel only as needed, the situation should improve within the next two to three days.

Earlier in the morning, the government announced the withdrawal of restrictions on fuel distribution after several imported shipments reached Chattogram Port.

The restrictions had been lifted to facilitate smooth travel during the upcoming Eid-ul-Fitr holidays and to support farmers’ fuel needs during the ongoing Boro cultivation season, the power, energy, and mineral resources ministry said in a statement.

With improved supply, fuel will now be available at all distribution points according to demand, effective immediately and until further notice.

The government earlier introduced fuel rationing and other controls as a precautionary measure amid concerns over possible supply disruptions in the international fuel market due to the ongoing conflict in the Middle East.

At yesterday’s meeting, Amit sought cooperation from district administrations to address current global challenges related to electricity and energy supply.

He instructed them to bring discipline to the supply and distribution management of fuel oil.

Key instructions included verifying opening and closing stocks at fuel depots every day, ensuring the supply of fuel allocated from depots to petrol pumps, monitoring distribution to all customers, and investigating specific reasons if any petrol pump remains closed.

The other directives included preventing illegal hoarding of fuel, ensuring the security of oil depots, stopping fuel smuggling, and keeping a strict watch to prevent sales at higher prices.

“The current elected government is sincerely trying to ensure that public suffering does not increase. The administration is expected to remain vigilant and perform its duties with greater firmness,” Amit said.

He also called for several electricity-saving measures to be implemented through district administrations.

Earlier, at a meeting with business leaders, Amit instructed them to avoid decorative

lighting in shopping malls and commercial establishments, keep air conditioner temperatures at 25 degrees Celsius or higher and turn off signboard lights after shops are closed.

Representatives from the Federation of Bangladesh Chambers of Commerce and Industry, the Dhaka Chamber of Commerce and Industry, the Bangladesh Shop Owners’ Association, Bangladesh Dokan Byabosayi Malik Samity, and the Dhaka Metropolitan Shop Owners Association attended the meeting.

In another meeting with leaders of the Petrol Pump Owners’ Association, Amit sought their cooperation to keep the fuel supply normal.

Association leaders assured that discipline would return quickly through discussion and coordinated decisions. They also expressed relief over the ministry’s swift action and said the situation would soon return to normal.

Meanwhile, reports from Gazipur said most filling stations in Kapasia and Sreepur upazilas remained closed after the withdrawal of rationing, causing shortages and putting vehicles in trouble.

Motorcyclist Saiful Islam was seen pushing his bike into the AK Filling Station after running out of fuel. Another biker, Noman Mia from Pelaid village of Kapasia, was with him.

Noman told The Daily Star that there is no petrol, octane or diesel at this filling station. However, fuel is available in the open market outside.

“It seems like the work of a syndicate. The filling stations are not selling fuel but are instead selling it outside at higher prices,” he said.

A vendor was seen selling loose oil from a table on the north side of Bormi intersection at Tk 150 per litre, much higher than the government-fixed rate. When asked, the seller refused to say his name.

“There is no shortage of fuel in my shop,” he said.

In Chattogram city, snaking queues were seen outside many filling stations yesterday afternoon.

Octane was unavailable in the Sena Filling and CNG Station on Bayezid Road and at the Tigerpass Agency. Another nearby filling station Badshah Miah and Sons was closed.

[Our correspondents in Gazipur and Chattogram contributed to this report.]

Legal Notice

IFIC Bank PLC, Gulshan Branch, 109 Gulshan Avenue, Dhaka 1212, has issued various credit facilities to (1) **Scholastica Limited, Represented by its Managing Director**, Syeda Madiha Murshed, Address: Plot No. 2, Road No. 8/9, Sector No. 1, Uttara Model Town, Dhaka-1230. AND Registered Office: Khawaja Tower, 95 Bir Uttam A K Khandakar Road, Mohakhali (Borrower & Mortgagor) (2) **Syeda Madiha Murshed**, Daughter of Syed Tanvir Murshed & Yasmeen Murshed, Managing Director (Guarantor and Legal Heir of Mrs. Yasmeen Murshed) (3) **Syed Maher Murshed**, Son of Syed Tanvir Murshed & Yasmeen Murshed, Chairman and Director (Guarantor and Legal Heir of Mrs. Yasmeen Murshed) (4) **Wasima Parveen**, Daughter of Sayed Anwar Hossain & Rajia Hossain & Wife of Syed Akhtar Hossain, Director, (Guarantor) (5) **Mr. Amer Ahmed**, Son of Kamal Ahmed & Mushfiqa Kamal & Husband of Mitali Ahmed, Director, (Guarantor) (6) **Ectetera Bangladesh (Pvt.) Limited**, (Guarantor) (7) **United Resources Corporation Limited** (Inc. No.-C-14411 Dated 29.06.1985) (Mortgagor)

The outstanding dues of the aforesaid loan stand at **Tk. 729,89,85,715.65 (Taka Seven Hundred Twenty Nine Crore Eighty Nine Lac Eighty Five Thousand Seven Hundred Fifteen and paisa Sixty Five) only** as on 08.03.2026 (interest charge up to following manner). Schedule of claim on A/c. **Scholastica Limited** is as follows: -

SL	A/c No.	Outstanding as on 08.03.2026	Last date of charging interest in the A/c.
1	1002370470-001	24,904,441.50	31.12.2025
2	1002370470-101	3,981,254,800.50	31.12.2025
3	0000370470-485	135,09,85,376.74	30.06.2025
4	0000370470-486	840,597,720.07	31.12.2025
5	0000370470-487	1,101,243,376.84	31.12.2025
Total		7,298,985,715.65	

We request you to take appropriate steps for making payment with interest up to eventual date of repayment within 15 (Fifteen) days from the date of publication of this notice, failing which our client will take appropriate steps for selling out the mortgaged properties on auction as per Artha Rin Adalat Ain-2003.

Schedule o Properties
Schedule-I
Deed of Mortgage No. 11559 dated 06.09.2011 and Registered General Irrevocable Power of Attorney No. 6721 dated 06.09.2011.

All that piece and parcel of land measuring 46626 sft or 64 kataths 12 chattaks 6sft more or less situated in the Uttara Residential Model Town of Rajdhani Unnayan Karttripakha (RAJUK) in the city of Dhaka, District- Dhaka, Police Station- Uttara and Sub-Registry Office- Gulshan at present Uttara, Dhaka.

Schedule II
Deed of Mortgage No. 6720 dated 22.10.2017/23.10.2017 and Registered General Irrevocable Power of Attorney No. 6721 dated 22.10.2017/23.10.2017.

All that piece and parcel of land measuring 92.42 (ninety two point four two) decimal with basement to sixth (06th) floor space measuring 14,5095.65 square feet situated within District - Dhaka, Police Station: Mirpur and Sub-Registry Office – Mirpur, **Mouza-Senpara Parbata.**

Schedule III
Deed of Mortgage No. 13802 dated 23.12.2024 and Registered General Irrevocable Power of Attorney No. 13803 dated 23.12.2024.

All that piece and parcel of land measuring (12.00 + 6.46 + 9.86 + 5.50 + 11.50 + 15.00) = 60.32 (sixty point three two) decimal situated within District- Narayanganj, standing in the name of Scolastica Limited along with all structure constructed or to be constructed thereon, situated within District-Narayanganj: Police Station & Sub-Registry Office: Rugganj, under Narayanganj.

B.M. Elias, Senior Advocate, Supreme Court of Bangladesh
For: The Lawyers Mahtab Centre, Suite- 07 (3rd Floor)
177, Shahid Syed Nazrul Islam Sharanai Bijoy Nagar, Dhaka.

Request for Proposal (RFP)
For Ground Development Works at National Cricket Ground (NCG), Purbachal, Dhaka

**Bangladesh Cricket Board**

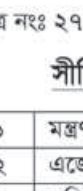
Ref No.: BCB/ Grounds/T&P/ Ground Development Works-NCG /2026/206 Date: 16th March 2026

The Bangladesh Cricket Board hereby invites for Sealed Proposals for “Construction of 2 Nos Ground works (ICC Standard) for the National Cricket Ground (NCG) at Purbachal, Dhaka” from the Bona-fide Contractors / Firms / Organizations as per the terms and conditions as giving as follows:

1	Organization	Bangladesh Cricket Board
2	Procuring Entity Name	Chief Executive Officer, BCB
3	Invitation for	Construction of 2 Nos Ground works (ICC Standard) for the National Cricket Ground at Purbachal, Dhaka.
4	Procuring Entity District	Dhaka, Bangladesh.
5	Invitation Ref:	BCB/ Grounds/T&P/ Ground Development Works-NCG /2026/206
6	Procurement Method	Open Tendering Method (OTM).
7	Budget and source of Fund	Bangladesh Cricket Board
8	Tender Publication Date	16/03/2026
9	Tender Last Selling Date	12/04/2026 at 4:00 PM
10	Tender Closing date and time	13/04/2026 at 12:00 PM
11	Tender Opening date and time	13/04/2026 at 1:30 PM
12	Name and address of the selling tender	Finance & Accounts Department, 2 nd Floor, Management Office, Bangladesh Cricket Board at Sher-e-Bangla National Cricket Stadium, Mirpur-2, Dhaka 1216, Bangladesh.
13	Place of receiving & Opening tender	Management Office of Bangladesh Cricket Board at Sher-e-Bangla National Cricket Stadium, Mirpur-2, Dhaka 1216, Bangladesh.
14	Place / Date / Time of Pre-Tender meeting (Optional)	To be notified.
15	Eligibility and Qualification of Tenderers	The tenderers must meet the eligibility criteria as stated in the qualification criteria section as mentioned in the tender schedule.
16	General instruction for Tender Submission	The intending tenderer shall have to apply to the undersigned in their letter head along with copies of experience certificates from concerned authority, trade license, VAT and income tax certificates etc. for issuance of tender documents. Contractors must have all type of Sand filling, Dressing, Leveling, Sloping equipment's.
17	Tender Security	Tender Documents will be issued from the office of the undersigned on cash payment of Tk.5000/= (Taka Five Thousand) only (Non-refundable) on all working days during office hours from 10:30 AM to 05:00 PM.
18	The BCB reserves the right to accept or reject any or all tenders without assigning any reason. Further, BCB also reserves the right to cancel the entire tender process and / or modify, add or alter the terms of the document and/ or the conditions for Tender by issuing an addendum(s) at any time prior to the submission of the Tender.	

Chief Executive Officer
Bangladesh Cricket Board

Management Office: Sher-e-Bangla National Cricket Stadium, Mirpur-2, Dhaka 1216
Tel: +880 2 8031001-4, Fax: 803 1199



বাংলাদেশ বিদ্যুৎ উন্নয়ন বোর্ড
Bangladesh Power Development Board

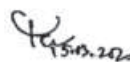
নির্বাহী প্রকৌশলীর দপ্তর
ফিল্ড ও বিতরণ বিভাগ, অসমীপ
ফিল্ড, অসমীপ হাউস, উত্তর
সেফা, ১১১-১১৫
E-mail: vey_agrabadi@yahoo.com
www.bpd.gov.bd

সূত্র নংঃ ২৭.১১.১৫৭৮.৭৪৬.০২.০৬৪.২৬-৮-২৯
তারিখঃ ১৫/০৩/২০২৬ইং

সীমিত দরপত্র (LTM)-এ অংশগ্রহণের জন্য তালিকাভুক্তকরণ বিজ্ঞপ্তি

১	মন্ত্রণালয়/বিভাগ	:-	বিদ্যুৎ জালানী ও খনিজ সম্পদ মন্ত্রণালয়, বিদ্যুৎ বিভাগ।
২	এজেন্সী/প্রতিষ্ঠান	:-	বাংলাদেশ বিদ্যুৎ উন্নয়ন বোর্ড।
৩	প্রকিউরিং এনটিটিসি নাম	:-	বিক্রয় ও বিতরণ বিভাগ-সম্বীপ, বিউবো, চট্টগ্রাম।
৪	প্রকিউরিং এনটিটি জেলা	:-	চট্টগ্রাম।
৫	কাজের বিবরণ/সরবরাহের নাম	:-	বিবিবি-সম্বীপ, বিউবো, চট্টগ্রাম দপ্তরের ২০২৫-২০২৬ইং অর্থ বৎসরের অনুমোদিত এপিপিভুক্ত কাজের যোগ্যতাসম্পন্ন ঠিকাদার প্রতিষ্ঠান সীমিত ক্রয় পদ্ধতি (LTM) এ তালিকাভুক্তকরণ।
৬	ঠিকাদারের যোগ্যতা	:-	বিউবোর হালনাগাদ তালিকাভুক্ত এ, বি ও সি শ্রেণির বৈদ্যুতিক ঠিকাদার এবং শর্তাবলীতে বর্ণিত যোগ্যতাসম্পন্ন হইতে হইবে।
৭	তালিকাভুক্তির ফি	:-	পিপিআর-২০২৫ এর বিধি মোতাবেক শ্রেণি ভিত্তিক তালিকাভুক্তির ফি ৫,০০০/- (পাঁচ হাজার) এবং শ্রেণি ভিত্তিক নবায়ন ফি ২,০০০/- (দুই হাজার টাকা) এবং একক মালিকানাধীন প্রতিষ্ঠানের স্বত্বাধিকারী নারী হইলে তালিকাভুক্তির ফি ৩,০০০/- (তিন হাজার) এবং শ্রেণি ভিত্তিক নবায়ন ফি ১,৫০০/- (এক হাজার পাঁচশত টাকা) মাত্র।
৮	আবেদন ফরমের মূল্য	:-	উপ-পরিচালক (হিসাব), আহিদ, পিএন্ডডি, বিউবো, চট্টগ্রামের অনুকূলে প্রতিসেট আবেদন ফরমের মূল্য বাবদ ৫০০.০০ (পাঁচশত) টাকা মাত্র অফেরতযোগ্য পে-অর্ডার/ব্যাংক ড্রাফট প্রদান করিতে হইবে।
৯	তালিকাভুক্তির ফরম জরুর সময় প্রয়োজনীয় কাগজপত্র	:-	ঠিকাদার প্রতিষ্ঠানের প্রকৃত মালিকানা দলিল, ভ্যাট রেজিস্ট্রেশন সার্টিফিকেট, হালনাগাদ আয়কর সার্টিফিকেট, হালনাগাদ ট্রেড লাইসেন্স এর মূলকপি প্রদর্শন এবং সভায়িত ডকুমেন্ট একসেট দাখিল করতে হবে।
১০	বাজেট ও তহবিলের প্রকৃতি	:-	রাজস্ব বাজেট/বিউবোর নিজস্ব বাজেট/জমাভিত্তিক।
১১	অর্থ বৎসর	:-	২০২৫-২০২৬খ্রিঃ।
১২	বিক্রয়ের সর্বশেষ তারিখ ও সময়	:-	৩০/০৩/২০২৬খ্রিঃ (দুপুর ০২.০০ ঘটিকা পর্যন্ত)।
১৩	দাখিলের তারিখ সময় ও স্থান	:-	৩১/০৩/২০২৬খ্রিঃ (বেলা ১২.০০ ঘটিকা পর্যন্ত)। নির্বাহী প্রকৌশলীর দপ্তর, বিক্রয় ও বিতরণ বিভাগ-সম্বীপ, বিউবো, চট্টগ্রাম।
১৪	যোগ্যতার শর্তাবলী	:-	ক) পিপিএ-২০০৬ (সর্বশেষ সংশোধনসহ)/পিপিআর-২০২৫ অনুযায়ী সকল কার্যক্রম গ্রহণ করা হইবে। খ) পরিচালন, মেরামত ও রক্ষণাবেক্ষণ, পরিবহন, জমাভিত্তিক ও সরবরাহ কাজে বোর্ডের নীতিমালা অনুসরণ করিতে হইবে। গ) ন্যূনতম ৫.০০ লক্ষ টাকার লিকুইড অ্যাসেট সার্টিফিকেট দাখিল করিতে হইবে। ঘ) হালনাগাদ এ.বি.সি লাইসেন্স, ভ্যাট রেজিস্ট্রেশন সার্টিফিকেট, আয়কর সার্টিফিকেট, মালিকানা দলিল ও জাতীয় পরিচয়পত্রের সভায়িত কপি দাখিল করিতে হইবে। ঙ) নিম্নস্বাক্ষরকারী যে কোন কারণ দর্শানো ব্যতিরেকে আবেদন গ্রহণ/বাতিল করার ক্ষমতা সংরক্ষণ করেন।

বিদ্যুৎ/জন-৮৯৭(২)/১৫/০৩/২৬


নির্বাহী প্রকৌশলী
 পরিচিতি নং-০১-০২১১৫
 বিক্রয় ও বিতরণ বিভাগ-সম্বীপ
 বিউবো, চট্টগ্রাম

জিডি-৬১৫

Strictly monitor edible oil prices and supply

Exploitative practices by suppliers must be checked

The apparent shortage of soyabean and palm edible oils in kitchen markets and retail shops across the country, which has pushed edible oil prices above maximum retail prices, appears opportunistic in light of the Middle East war and Ramadan-Eid festival period. According to media reports, the commerce ministry claims that the country has sufficient stock of edible oil, while domestic refiners say they are regularly supplying the usual quantities. Therefore, there should be neither a shortage nor a shortage-induced price hike.

Yet, chain super shops and large retail stores are limiting the number of five-litre bottled soyabean and palm oil an individual consumer can buy, while in many other places customers are having to pay Tk 5-Tk 10 more per litre for loose edible oil. Reports quote retail shop owners' claims that wholesalers are charging higher prices. On the other hand, some wholesalers are blaming the refiners. Others are even blaming the US-Israel war on Iran for the shortage. What's baffling is that Bangladesh imports crude soyabean oil from places such as Argentina, Brazil and Paraguay and palm oil from Malaysia and Indonesia—countries that are not directly affected by the war.

The war, nevertheless, has driven up freight costs, making almost all shipments costly, irrespective of the route used. Also, the global prices of both soyabean and palm oil have been on the rise. The World Bank's commodity price data shows that in December 2025 the monthly average prices for palm and soyabean oil were \$980 and \$1,116 per metric tonne, respectively, while in February 2026 the prices were \$1,042 and \$1,270 per metric tonne. However, the current official prices in the Bangladeshi market do not reflect this rise in global prices, as per a report in *Bonik Barta*. As a standard procedure, the government approves adjustments to edible oil prices monthly to reflect global booking and import costs, but the interim government did not do so this year as a new government was set to take over soon. So, while refiners could not increase the official price of bottled oil, which is monitored more stringently, the prices of loose soyabean and palm oil have been increased.

The government must identify those responsible for the current situation in the edible oil market and take appropriate action against them. At the same time, it must revive the price review process, even if the outcome is not politically popular. In a free market, where the government cannot efficiently monitor every part of the supply chain, suppliers exploit gaps in oversight by raising prices or restricting supply to "correct" the market themselves. Such practices often harm consumers more than if official prices were set closer to actual market levels. Authorities should therefore establish an effective mechanism to prevent supply-chain syndicates from manipulating prices showing artificial shortages.

Continued neglect of potato farmers

Govt must protect them from further losses

There seems to be no end to the struggles of potato farmers. Since the beginning of the year, farmers in the north have been incurring losses due to low market prices. Now, sudden waterlogging in the fields following recent rains has doubled their burden. On the ground across Gaibandha, Joypurhat, and Bogura, this daily found hundreds of acres of potato fields waterlogged—many fully submerged—over the weekend. Many of the crops were ready to be harvested before the rains struck.

Reportedly, some farmers had delayed harvesting because they could not find enough farmhands in time, while others were unable to secure space in cold storages. Some were also waiting for prices to rise before harvesting in order to avoid losses like last year. But with even quality potatoes failing to fetch good prices, the rains have put more farmers' crops at risk of underpricing, rot, or even waste. What stands out in the multifaceted plight of potato farmers, however, is the systemic neglect they have been facing for long.

In the 2024-25 season, Bangladesh produced a record 1.15 crore tonnes of potatoes, far surpassing the annual demand of 90 lakh tonnes. Without any export expansion initiatives from the government, most farmers had to bear heavy losses caused by the price collapse. In August 2025, when much of the damage had already been done, the agriculture ministry announced plans to purchase 50,000 tonnes of potatoes for cold storage and later sale, setting a minimum price of Tk 22 per kg at storage gates. However, the plan saw no action and was eventually withdrawn in November.

Meanwhile, a Tk 110 crore cash incentive plan announced by the ministry in early December is also sitting idle. These incentives were meant to compensate potato farmers for the losses they have absorbed, yet the prices they receive for the crop continue to fall, with potatoes selling for only Tk 9-10 per kilogramme at the field level. While industrialists are able to access huge loans at meagre interest rates, potato farmers struggle to access credit. Even within the agricultural sector, there appears to be a hierarchy in which potato farmers find themselves at a lower position—one that is not proportional to the importance of their crop to the country's collective diet.

We urge the authorities to take notice not only of the crops affected by the recent untimely rains, but also of the continued systemic neglect facing potato farmers. The 2024-25 season was disastrous for these people, and many have yet to recover from those losses. The government must act proactively to prevent further damage and work with the farmers to ensure timely harvesting, storage, and fair prices this year.

THIS DAY IN HISTORY

Mujib-Yahya talks begin in Dhaka

On March 16, 1971, talks began in Dhaka between Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and Pakistan President Yahya Khan to resolve the political crisis after the 1970 general election. The negotiations aimed at transferring power to the Awami League but failed, as tensions continued to rise ahead of the Liberation War.

A risky moment to liberalise capital exit



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The Bangladesh Bank's recent decision to raise the threshold for approval-free repatriation of foreign investment—from Tk 10 crore to Tk 100 crore—marks a significant step towards liberalising capital flows. This initiative is intended to improve the country's investment climate by reducing bureaucratic delays and assuring foreign investors that they can exit the market more easily. Yet, the policy comes at a delicate moment. With the Bangladeshi taka depreciating sharply, foreign exchange reserves under pressure, and the global economic uncertainty rising, the decision raises an important question: is Bangladesh easing capital exit just when investor confidence is becoming fragile?

At first glance, the policy appears sensible. Foreign investors consistently cite difficulties in repatriating profits and disinvestment proceeds as a major concern when investing in emerging markets. Allowing banks to process larger repatriation transactions without prior central bank approval could reduce regulatory bottlenecks and send a positive signal that Bangladesh welcomes foreign capital. But the broader macroeconomic context makes the timing of this initiative particularly sensitive.

Over the past few years, the taka has weakened significantly against the US dollar. In 2021, the exchange rate hovered around Tk 84-86 per dollar. By 2024-2025, it depreciated to roughly Tk 110-120 per dollar in the formal market—a decline of nearly 35 percent within just a few years. While a weaker currency can sometimes enhance export competitiveness, it also creates uncertainty for foreign investors whose returns are ultimately measured in dollars or euros.

For foreign investors, exchange rate movements directly affect the real value of their investments. Consider a simple example. Suppose a foreign investor brings \$10 million into Bangladesh when the exchange rate is Tk85 per dollar. The investment is therefore worth Tk 850 million in local currency. If the project performs well and its value rises to Tk 1 billion, the investment appears profitable in taka terms. But if the exchange rate

depreciates to Tk120 per dollar by the time the investor exits, the repatriated value becomes approximately \$8.33 million. Despite the company's growth in local currency terms, the investor effectively loses about \$1.67 million once the funds are converted back into dollars.

This simple arithmetic explains why currency depreciation often creates anxiety among foreign investors. If investors expect the taka to weaken further, they may prefer to repatriate funds earlier rather



VISUAL: SALMAN SAKIB SHAHRYAR

than risk larger losses later. In such circumstances, policies that make capital repatriation easier could unintentionally accelerate capital outflows.

These concerns become more pronounced when considered in the context of Bangladesh's broader external position. The country's forex reserves have declined significantly from their peak during the Covid pandemic. In 2021, reserves exceeded \$44 billion, providing comfortable coverage for imports. Currently, reserves stand at around \$29 billion, covering approximately five months of imports (Bangladesh Bank, Monetary Policy Statement, January 2026). At the same time, Bangladesh's external debt has increased to more than \$112 billion, according to CEIC data. This increase largely reflects expanded borrowing to finance

major infrastructure projects and development initiatives. Although the overall debt remains manageable by international standards, the growing burden of debt servicing obligations is placing additional pressure on the country's balance of payments.

Bangladesh also continues to struggle in attracting large volumes of foreign direct investment (FDI). Annual FDI inflows typically range between \$1 billion and \$2 billion, far below the levels seen in regional competitors. Vietnam, for instance, attracts more than \$20 billion annually, while the Philippines receives around \$10 billion, according to World Bank data. Structural challenges, including regulatory complexity, infrastructure constraints, land acquisition difficulties, and governance concerns, continue to limit Bangladesh's appeal to global investors.

From this perspective, the Bangladesh Bank's decision to raise

the repatriation limit can be seen as an effort to improve the investment environment. Investors are more willing to enter a market when they know they can exit without excessive restrictions. Yet, the same policy designed to reassure investors could make it easier for them to leave if confidence weakens.

Recent developments in South Asia illustrate how quickly investor sentiment can shift when macroeconomic vulnerabilities emerge. Before Sri Lanka's economy collapsed in 2022, years of fiscal imbalances, rising external debt, and declining forex reserves had eroded investor confidence. As reserves fell below \$3 billion, capital began leaving the country and the Sri Lankan rupee depreciated sharply. Within months, the country faced severe shortages of foreign currency and

The burqa and the bomb: A disturbing war narrative



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It is the burqa again—the piece of cloth that many Muslim women choose to wear for religious reasons. Yet this garment has been burdened with some of the harshest and most dehumanising representations imaginable.

Recently, the burqa was invoked in a shocking claim suggesting that being bombed to death would be preferable to living while wearing one. Such a statement is completely detached from the lived experiences of the women who actually wear the garment. It reflects a projection shaped by Western power, cultural hegemony, and deep-seated prejudice.

This remark was made by Matt Schlapp, an American political lobbyist, prominent supporter of Donald Trump, and chair of the Conservative Political Action Committee (CPAC). During an appearance on Piers Morgan Uncensored, Schlapp was discussing the US-Israeli bombing of the Shajarah Tayyebah girls' school in southern Iran—a strike that killed 175 children, mostly girls, along with several school staff members. When journalist Peter Beinart argued that the victims would still be alive had the

United States and Israel not attacked Iran, Schlapp responded that the girls would otherwise have grown up wearing the burqa—a common practice in Iran—which he described as part of a "barbaric" society.

His remark drew widespread criticism for implying that death was preferable to life in a burqa. Even though he later denied making any such comparison, no amount of backtracking can conceal the logic embedded in his statement. Anyone with a basic understanding of language and communication can see that Schlapp's comment attempted to justify the US-Israeli attack and the killing of innocent children.

Schlapp's theory suggests that living in a burqa is not simply undesirable—it is worse than death. By extension, millions of Muslim women who wear the burqa in other parts of the world must, in this worldview, be living lives "worse than death." If killing girls is justified on the grounds that they might grow up wearing burqas in Iran, then the same logic could be applied elsewhere.

Wearing a burqa is neither new nor unique to Islam. Variants of veiling

have existed for centuries across multiple religions and cultures. What is new are the dangerous meanings projected onto it—meanings shaped by globalisation, migration, and the encounter between diverse cultural practices. As the burqa became more visible in Western societies, it was increasingly perceived as a threat. This perception fuelled efforts to ban it in several European nations.

Dominant discourses have framed the burqa as a symbol of oppression enforced by Muslim men or theocratic governments. Burqa-wearing women are portrayed as if they were living prisons—denied freedom, mobility, or the pleasures of life. Yet, even this prison metaphor seems mild compared to Schlapp's invocation of the burqa in the context of the US-Israeli aggression against Iran.

Invoking the burqa to justify mass murder reveals how effectively it can be weaponised.

This reference also underscores the religious framing of the war. Since the 1979 revolution, Iran has defined itself as an Islamic nation with strict religious laws. Whether all Iranians embrace these rules is a legitimate question, but what is clear is that Iran never concealed its religious identity. It also consistently stated that it did not seek war with the US or Israel, although it vowed to defend itself if attacked.

The US's motivations, by contrast, remain ambiguous. Some explanations cite regime change, control of Iranian oil (as in Venezuela), preventing nuclear capabilities, or being pressured by Netanyahu. Others frame the war in religious terms. At times, the US casts

eventually defaulted on its sovereign debt. Pakistan experienced a similar pattern. Persistent balance of payment pressures and declining reserves forced repeated IMF interventions. Between 2021 and 2023, the Pakistani rupee lost more than half its value, largely driven by external financing shortages and investor uncertainty.

Bangladesh is not like Sri Lanka or Pakistan. Its export-oriented RMG industry remains strong, and remittance inflows continue to provide an important source of foreign currency. The country is also implementing reforms under an IMF-supported programme aimed at stabilising the macroeconomy and strengthening financial governance.

Nevertheless, the recent depreciation of the taka and the decline in reserves highlight emerging vulnerabilities. In such an environment, investor perceptions can become just as important as economic fundamentals. If foreign investors begin to fear further currency depreciation, the ease of repatriating capital could accelerate outflows rather than attracting new investment.

Ultimately, the success of Bangladesh Bank's repatriation initiative will depend not only on the policy itself but also on the credibility of broader economic management. Foreign investors rarely panic simply because of regulation change. They panic when they lose confidence in a country's macroeconomic stability: when currencies weaken rapidly, reserves decline, and policy direction becomes uncertain. For Bangladesh's new government and central bank leadership, the task ahead is clear: stabilise the exchange rate, rebuild forex reserves, and maintain consistent economic policies. Only by restoring confidence in the stability of the taka can the country ensure that liberalising capital flows strengthens its investment climate rather than exposing new vulnerabilities.

Bangladesh has long been regarded as one of South Asia's most promising emerging economies. Whether it continues on that trajectory or drifts towards the instability seen elsewhere in the region will depend on how carefully policymakers manage this delicate moment. Without stabilising the taka and rebuilding forex buffers, easing capital exit rules may not attract new investment; instead, it could accelerate the departure of existing capital. In the end, the success of liberalisation will depend not on how quickly the doors to capital are opened, but on how firmly the foundations of stability are secured.

itself as the arbiter of intra-Muslim conflicts, claiming a role in resolving the Sunni-Shia divide. This is striking given decades of portraying Islam—without distinction between sects—as a source of terrorism.

The conflict has also been framed as a "religious war" by certain circles within the US and Israel. Reports suggest American service members were told they were fighting a "holy war" against Islamic infidels. Images circulated of Christian clerics apparently praying over Trump, claiming divine anointment and suggesting the war would hasten the second coming. The "holy war" metaphor is not new—President Bush used similar language during the global war on terror. What is new is the invocation of Armageddon.

The burqa debate may now be overshadowed by official denials of responsibility for the bombing of the Iranian school. Both Trump and his defence secretary suggested the attack might have been carried out by Iran itself, although there has been mounting evidence that the US was responsible for the killings. This is also a denial of history by American leadership. Such denials fail to acknowledge the audience of their words and their actions.

As the war continues with no clear pause or resolution, one can expect the narratives to shift further—more references to burqa or sharia, more denials, and more rhetorical manoeuvring, often with little connection to the realities on the ground.

July charter and constitutional reform: Will we waste a generational opportunity?

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The oppression of citizens under the Sheikh Hasina regime resulted in the July uprising. Through repeated breaches of trust, the regime forfeited its moral authority to govern, while the democratic and republican character of the state was destroyed. The Constitution, having been manipulated and undermined, effectively became inoperative when the head of government fled to India. As sovereignty ultimately belongs to the people, political authority thus devolved to them.

The idea that citizens may alter or abolish a government that betrays their trust is a long-standing doctrine in political thought. One of the most famous expressions of this idea appears in the Declaration of Independence of the United States, which states that whenever a government becomes destructive of unalienable human rights, “it is the right of the people to alter or to abolish it, and to institute new government.”

The interim government of 2024-26 was formed outside the framework of the written Constitution, on the basis of the people's sovereign authority. Hence, it possessed certain unique competences, including the authority to take tangible steps to reform the state machinery for the restoration of the republic and democracy and for the protection of citizens' rights. The July National Charter and the July National Charter (Constitution Reform) Implementation Order, 2025 were adopted pursuant to that competence.

BNP’s reason for not taking the oath—that the Constitution does not provide for the assembly or the oath—is constitutionally unfounded. This is because the people are supreme, even above the Constitution itself. Article 7 of the Constitution recognises this principle, stating that all powers in the republic belong to the people. It is therefore not tenable to argue the absence of constitutional provisions for something that the people have overwhelmingly approved in a referendum.

While the interim government represented the people' sovereign authority, the extent and limits of that authority were difficult to define clearly. Therefore, for the implementation of the charter and the order, two further steps were put in place: first, a referendum involving the direct participation of the people; and second, the formation of a Constitution Reform Assembly (CRA) to be composed of their representatives elected through the election. Thus, in the design for implementing constitutional reforms, the people were placed at the centre of the process.

So on February 12, in addition to electing members of the new parliament, citizens cast a separate vote in a referendum. The referendum

posed several critically important questions: should the next parliament have a dual role—serving both as a national legislature and as a Constitution Reform Assembly for 180 working days—and should fundamental changes be made to the existing system of checks and balances as envisioned in the July charter? More than seven and a half crore voters participated in the referendum, of whom 61.63 per cent voted “Yes.”

However, as of today, it remains unclear whether BNP, the party that won the election with a two-thirds majority, will respect the outcome of the referendum. Concerns have

documents grounded in popular sovereignty.

Furthermore, if we are to speak of the absence of provisions in the existing Constitution, many actions taken since August 5, 2024—including the election—are not covered by the Constitution per se. BNP does not appear to have any objection to most of those. By refusing to take the oath, the ruling party has disregarded the people's verdict.

The political significance of a referendum lies in giving citizens a direct voice and agency in shaping democratic outcomes. It is widely accepted that decision-making becomes more democratic when citizens are actively engaged.

popular consent. This is especially important in constitutional reform, where the exercise of popular sovereignty forms the foundation of the process and where the legislature cannot disregard people's will. Finally, as in this case, referendums often serve as a mechanism for dispute resolution: when political parties fail to reach agreement, the decision is made by citizens, who have the sovereign right to determine the outcome.

In light of the decisive result of the February 12 referendum, there can be no doubt about the expression of the people's collective will. Clearly, politicians, who are expected to

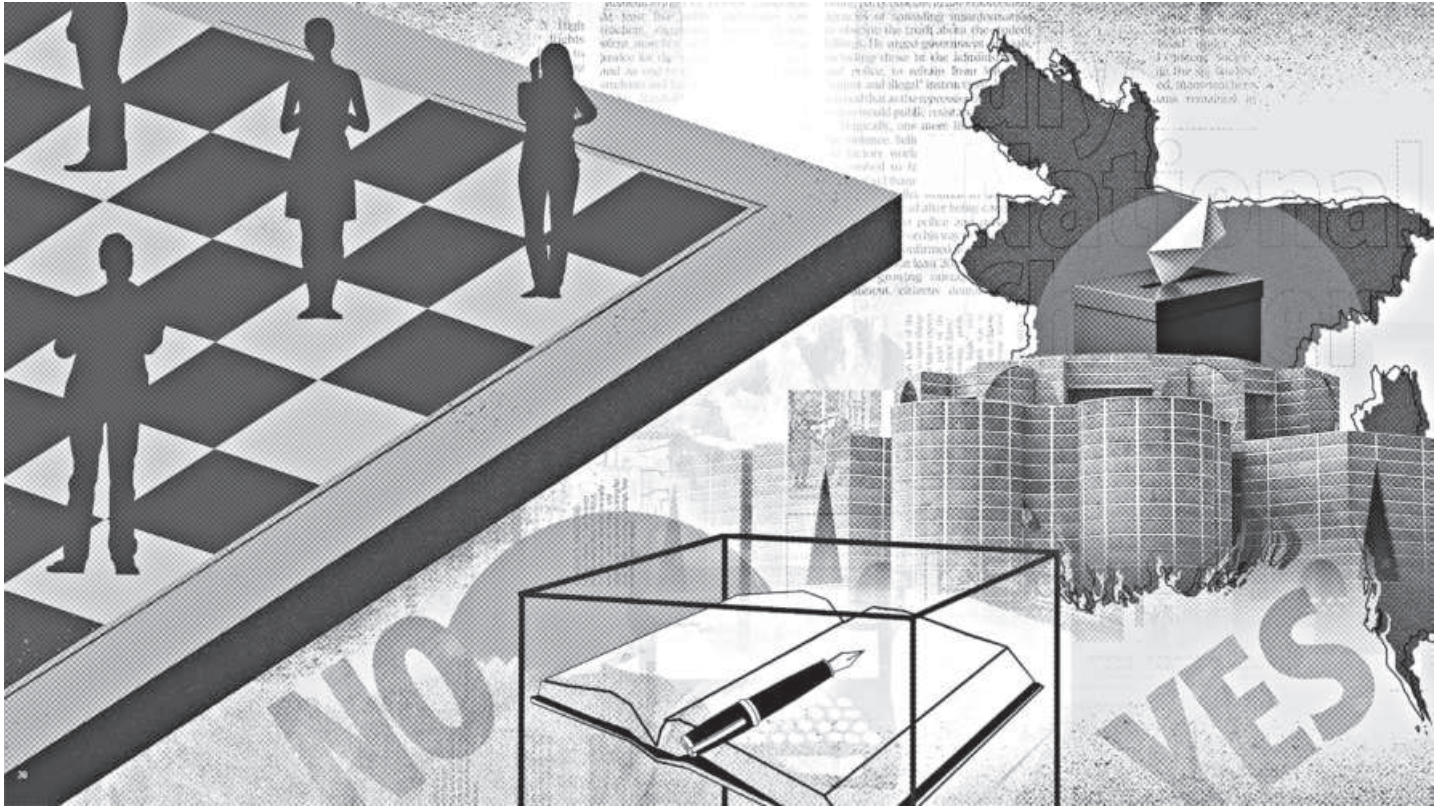
the governing party, and they also expected it to implement the key provisions of the July charter through the Constitution Reform Assembly. By approving the referendum, citizens conferred legitimacy on the key provisions of the charter, the implementation order, and the assembly. It is also noteworthy that, prior to the election, BNP had endorsed the referendum, urging citizens to vote in favour.

Despite its formal wording and legalistic narrative, the July charter's central message is clear: traditional liberal democratic checks and balances intended to constrain the executive have hardly worked in the country since its independence. Such accountability failures have also led to many tragic outcomes. The reasons for this are well known: historically contingent patterns of strong personalistic, overtly centralised, and dynastic rule have, over the decades, fostered perverse forms of political and social orders characterised by patron-clientelism, a weakened civil society, and a totalised form of party-archal governance in which dominant political parties have, *de facto*, monopolised and controlled nearly all institutions and actors of the state. This perversity has rendered existing checks and balances largely dysfunctional and, more critically, prevented the growth of effective citizens' countervailing power, which is essential for genuine democratic practice.

The July charter has crafted solutions intended to overcome the limitations and failures of these dysfunctional checks and balances by introducing multiple, complex accountability mechanisms aimed at constraining the executive (especially the prime minister) in a robust manner. One may hope that the implementation of these mechanisms will disperse power and neutralise the *de jure* and *de facto* dominance of the prime minister.

The few weeks of the new regime's tenure have already shown how critical it is to have robust checks and balances. Consider the following: the improper dismissal of the central bank governor, the deregulation of otherwise stringent loan-rescheduling rules, the removal of the MD of Dhaka metro rail, and the “voluntary” resignation of the commissioners of the Anti-Corruption Commission. Could the government have accomplished these actions at such dizzying speed if robust checks and balances involving multiple stakeholders, as proposed in the charter, had been in place?

If the Constitution Reform Assembly is not formed, constitutional reforms would need to proceed through amendments under Article 142, which confers on parliament the power to amend the Constitution. However, parliament cannot alter the fundamental features of the Constitution under Article 142 due to the basic structure doctrine. According to this doctrine, legislative power is derived from—and constrained by—the Constitution, whereas constituent power, the authority to create or fundamentally change a constitution, resides with the people, who exercised it in the February 12 referendum. Past attempts to amend the Constitution through parliamentary amendments, such as the Eighth and Thirteenth Amendments, were later struck down for violating the basic structure. Therefore, implementing the charter's fundamental reforms through Article 142 may not be sustainable. A resolution remains possible if BNP takes the oath for the reform assembly.



‘The political significance of a referendum lies in giving citizens a direct voice and agency in shaping democratic outcomes.’

VISUAL: ANWAR SOHEL

In an indirect democracy like ours, elections delegate decision-making authority solely to elected representatives, limiting citizens' opportunity to have their voices heard directly. This is particularly consequential for policies with fundamental implications for governance. As a tool of direct democracy, a referendum can complement representative institutions and is therefore one of the most important mechanisms for implementing constitutional reforms.

Since the 1970s, referendums have become increasingly popular in democratic countries, as greater emphasis has been placed on ensuring direct citizen engagement in the political process. According to one estimate, over the past 50 years, approximately 1,800 to 2,000 referendums have been held globally, of which more than 600 were constitutional referendums conducted to amend or introduce new constitutions.

Referendums have gained popularity for several reasons. First, they enable citizens to participate directly in political and law-making processes. Second, they allow people to exercise their sovereign authority over political outcomes. Third, referendums provide a means for citizens to express their collective will, lending legitimacy to decisions through

uphold democratic norms and values, cannot prioritise their own version of reforms over those endorsed by the citizens. To do so would constitute a direct violation of democratic principles.

It is true that the referendum questions were not easy. However, studies show that this is far from the first time that complex questions have been posed in a referendum. While a lack of clarity in framing questions can sometimes affect the likelihood of their approval, that was clearly not the case here. The argument that citizens did not understand the questions, and therefore their opinions do not matter, is elitist. Over seven crore people voted—surely, they did so based on their understanding of the issues—and to question their judgment on the basis of some supposed superior knowledge is simply outrageous. One might even ask: could the ego and preferences of certain politicians and experts result in the loss of a generational opportunity?

Several surveys conducted before the election indicated that citizens generally held favourable opinions about the referendum questions and were interested in bringing changes to the structure of political governance. Clearly, the outcomes of the election and the referendum reflect their will: most of them wanted BNP as

Why Bangladesh needs a brand reset



RMG NOTES
Mostafiz Uddin
is managing director of Denim Expert Limited. He is also the founder and CEO of Bangladesh Denim Expo and Bangladesh Apparel Exchange (BAE).

MOSTAFIZ UDDIN

For decades, the international image of Bangladesh has been shaped by a narrow and increasingly outdated narrative. Far too often, the country has been reduced to being a low-cost sourcing destination, associated mainly with labour exploitation, industrial accidents, and relentless price pressure. That was never the full picture, and it is even less so now. With a new government in place, we have a rare opportunity to rethink not just industrial policies but how the outside world perceives us. This is the right moment for a full branding reset.

Branding is more than a superficial side issue. The way a country is perceived affects investment decisions, buyer confidence, tourism, diplomatic influence, and the willingness of international companies to make long-term commitments. Countries that present a clear and credible story about who they are and where they are going tend to attract stronger partnerships. The good news is that we already have the substance to support a far stronger identity. What we have been lacking is a confident, coordinated and strategic effort to tell that story properly.

We should begin with the RMG sector, because it remains our industrial calling

card to the world. Our export growth over the last two decades has been remarkable. Bangladesh has become one of the most important RMG manufacturing countries in the world. But we need to stop presenting our success only in terms of low cost and scale. A much more powerful argument is that our industry is already evolving into something much more capable and forward-looking. Today, Bangladesh is home to one of the world's largest concentrations of green RMG factories. This is clear, undisputed evidence that our manufacturing base is upgrading. It shows we are investing in better buildings, stronger systems, more efficient operations, and a more credible industrial future—we are building modern industrial capacity.

The same is true for energy. More and more RMG factories are adopting rooftop solar power systems and looking seriously at renewables as a long-term strategy. Besides being important for cost and resilience, this also adds to our international brand. When buyers, investors and regulators are paying much closer attention to carbon, energy and supply chain performance, we should make it clear that our country wants to be seen as part of the solution, not the problem.

This is where our branding reset

should begin. We should position Bangladesh as the world's most serious platform for responsible, scalable apparel manufacturing. That message would be credible because it would be built on real strengths. We have a large workforce, a growing industrial base and a generation of young people who want jobs, skills and opportunity. We should present Bangladesh as a young, energetic manufacturing nation

The same is true for energy. More and more RMG factories are adopting rooftop solar power systems and looking seriously at renewables as a long-term strategy. Besides being important for cost and resilience, this also adds to our international brand. When buyers, investors and regulators are paying much closer attention to carbon, energy and supply chain performance, we should make it clear that our country wants to be seen as part of the solution, not the problem.

with the potential to move up the value chain not just in apparel but also in textiles, logistics, engineering, digital services, and green industry. We need that broader vision because if we define ourselves only through RMG manufacturing, we risk being trapped by it. If we have built one of the world's largest apparel industries, we can also build strength in technical textiles, man-made fibres, recycling, renewables, logistics, and higher-value manufacturing.

However, any branding reset must be backed by practical action. To make the world see Bangladesh differently, we must make it easier for the world to experience the unseen side of the country.

First, we should decide exactly what we

want Bangladesh to be known for over the next decade. In my view, our new identity should rest on five pillars: competitive manufacturing, verified sustainability, young talent, renewable energy transition, and reliability. Once that is decided, every ministry, agency, embassy, investment body and trade mission should use the same language.

Second, we need a much stronger

evidence-based branding platform. We should not rely on vague claims. We should back up our message with hard data, case studies, factory examples, energy metrics, workforce statistics, export performance, and investment reforms. Bangladesh should publish an annual competitiveness and branding report aimed at global buyers, investors and policymakers.

Third, we need to market the success stories that challenge old assumptions. That Bangladesh has one of the world's largest clusters of green RMG factories should be central to every trade mission and investment pitch. That our factories are installing solar panels, improving water use, upgrading machinery, and building

stronger compliance systems should be documented and promoted internationally.

Fourth, we must match branding with a better business environment. To project an image of modernity, investors and buyers must find—or build—an upgraded system. That means faster approvals, greater transparency, more efficient customs, better infrastructure planning, easier access to land, and fewer administrative bottlenecks. A branding reset cannot succeed if the experience of doing business does not improve alongside the message.

Fifth, we should align our national branding with green industrial strategy. The global sourcing model is changing. Decarbonisation, traceability, and environmental performance are becoming more important every year. The government should support rooftop solar, energy efficiency finance, wastewater treatment, grid reform and textile recycling infrastructure. To create a strong, resilient brand, we must make green industrialisation visible and measurable.

Finally, we need to tell our story more effectively across the world. Brand Bangladesh should not live only in official speeches or policy papers but be carried by ambassadors, trade commissioners, business leaders, universities and entrepreneurs. It should be visible at trade fairs, in global media, across digital channels, and in every major international forum where sourcing and investment decisions are shaped. This is about discipline, clarity, and consistency.

For too long, Bangladesh's image has been shaped by outsiders and by the worst chapters in our history. The next chapter should be written by us.

You haven't seen even 25% of 'Rakkhosh' yet: SIAM AHMED



SHAH ALAM SHAZU

As Eid-ul-Fitr approaches, actor Siam Ahmed finds himself once again at the centre of audience anticipation with his upcoming film *Rakkhosh*. After the trailer sparked strong reactions online, the actor expressed gratitude for the overwhelming response while hinting that the film still holds many undiscovered layers for viewers. The film is directed by Mehedi Hasan Hridoy.

Reacting to the response, Siam said he is overwhelmed by the love. "I'm seeing all the appreciation very positively. I'm grateful to everyone. But I can say this much — audiences haven't even seen twenty-five percent of *Rakkhosh* yet. There are many surprises waiting. They will discover them once they watch the film in theatres."

When asked about the film's genre, Siam revealed that *Rakkhosh* is essentially a romantic story. "That's another surprise of the film. People are making different assumptions — some think it's an action film, while others are interpreting it in various ways. All the reactions are positive, but I would say it is a romantic film," he said.

Addressing his fans, Siam reflected on the journey of his career. "When *Poramon 2* was made, I was not a recognised face. It was the audience who brought me forward, showered me with love, and stood beside me in every success. I've always received their support whenever my films were released. I hope I will receive the same love for *Rakkhosh* as well."

Siam also revealed that he shot action sequences consecutively for ten days for the film. The fight choreography was handled by renowned Mumbai-based action director Ejaz Master.

"Missing even a single day of shooting abroad means huge financial loss for the producer and director. So we kept going. During those days I got cuts and bruises and felt a lot of pain, but I never skipped a shoot. Instead, I kept preparing for the next scene. After the shoot, the way Ejaz Master and his team appreciated the effort is something I will never forget."

Speaking about director Mehedi Hasan Hridoy, Siam described him as extremely passionate about his craft. "Among all the directors I have worked with, he is one of the craziest when it comes to work. He has big dreams and works incredibly hard. While making *Rakkhosh*, we developed a great chemistry."

Siam also expressed happiness about several films releasing this Eid. "It feels great that so many films are coming out. They are all

our films — there's no division. My first film's co-star Puja Chery also has a film releasing this Eid — *Domn*, directed by Redoan Rony, who also directed my first drama. So we are all connected in one way or another, which makes me very happy."

Mentioning all the films releasing this Eid, Siam wished everyone for great success. "We are all part of the same family. My love and best wishes for every film releasing this Eid, including *Rakkhosh*."



PHOTO: SHEIKH MEHEDI MORSHED



'Premer Golpo' featuring Roshan and Chamak to release on Eid day

A musical love story titled *Premier Golpo* is set to premiere this Eid-ul-Fitr evening on the official YouTube channel of Sun Production House. Sung as a duet by Dilshad Nahar Kona and Sheikh Limon, the song features lyrics, composition and music arrangement by Avraal Shair.

The video stars Ziaul Roshan and Rukaiya Jahan Chamak, whose on-screen chemistry drives the story.

The film was shot in the scenic locations of Niladri Lake and Tahirpur, adding visual beauty to the romantic storyline. Directed by Mahin Awlad, the musical film presents a romantic narrative where every moment reflects the emotions and longing of love.

WHAT'S THE HAPS?

Cox's Bazar Film Festival

The Cox's Bazar Film Club is hosting its first-ever festival for Independence Day. The two-day event will screen a documentary followed by feature films including *Chhayabrikkho*, *Jolrong*, *Dot*, *Behula Dorodi*, *Moynar Char*, and *Madhyobitto*. Organisers aim to revive communal film viewing in an era of mobile screens, with open-air screenings by the sea.

DATE: FRIDAY-SATURDAY | MARCH 27-28
TIME: 5PM ONWARDS

VENUE: LABONI BEACH POINT, COX'S BAZAR

৯৪ তম স্বাধীনতা দিৱস উপলক্ষে



'Golmaal 5' announced with Akshay Kumar joining franchise

The makers of the popular comedy franchise *Golmaal* have officially announced a new instalment, revealing that Akshay Kumar will join the cast of *Golmaal 5*.

The announcement came on the birthday of director Rohit Shetty,

with a promotional video shared on social media. The clip features franchise regulars including Ajay Devgn, Arshad Warsi, Shreyas Talpade, Kunal Kemmu and Tusshar Kapoor, while also marking the return of Sharman Joshi to the series.

Akshay Kumar later appears in the clip, saying he is excited to join the "crazy family". Known for slapstick humour and eccentric characters, the franchise remains one of Bollywood's most successful comedy series.

NEWS

Local govt polls not BNP's priority yet

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upazila unit leader from Manikganj.

Grassroots leaders have begun contacting senior party figures in Dhaka, urging them to set a clear timetable for the elections so that local units can begin their preparations.

Some local leaders are also lobbying within the party to push the issue forward.

Senior leaders acknowledged the concerns but say the matter will be discussed formally in the party's policymaking forum before any decision is taken.

In the meantime, the BNP appears to be running many local government institutions by appointing administrators from its rank and file.

The government has already appointed administrators in 11 city corporations and 42 district zila

parishads across the country.

Until elections take place, most local government bodies — except union parishads — will be operated by administrators.

This arrangement will allow the government time to prepare properly for the elections, party leaders said.

Meanwhile, three standing committee members said that the party has been reviewing its performance after the national election. Some organisational weaknesses became visible during that process.

"Those will be corrected before the local elections — we do not want to repeat mistakes," said one of the standing committee members.

For that reason, the party leadership wants time to reorganise local committees and strengthen coordination between the

government and the party.

Meanwhile, the BNP-led government has not yet decided whether the upcoming local government elections will be held with party symbols or without party symbols.

On March 1, Election Commissioner Abdur Rahmanel Masud said the Election Commission will begin preparations for local government elections after Eid-ul-Fitr.

The ordinance removed the provision for party nomination for mayoral posts, he told reporters.

"If the parliament approves it, elections will follow that system. If the law changes again, then the election system will also change," he added.

Currently, there are 12 city corporations, 330 municipalities, 64 district councils, 495 upazila parishads and around 4,570 union parishads across the country.

Jamaat gears up for local polls

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the field. Identifying nominees in advance is helpful."

'SECOND BATTLE'

Jamaat Ameer and Leader of the Opposition Shafiqur Rahman has described the local government polls as the party's "second battle".

Addressing a programme in Sylhet on February 27, he said the party did not want to leave any local positions vacant and aimed to bring forward capable individuals, including those who had taken risks to stand by the party during the parliamentary election.

Preparations for local polls were also discussed at a meeting of Jamaat's central executive council at its Maghbazar headquarters the following day.

Party leaders say preparations for city corporation elections will be prioritised. Local units have been asked to send three-member panels of potential nominees for city corporation polls, with the central executive council set to make the final decisions.

For other local polls, Jamaat's 14 regional directors are expected to consult district and upazila ameer, secretaries, and key organisers to confirm candidates.

As per the law, elections to city corporations must be held within the 180 days preceding the expiry of their tenure. However, the five-year

term of Dhaka north and south city corporations ended in early June 2025.

At a programme at the Nirbachan Bhaban on March 1, Election Commissioner Abdur Rahmanel Masud said local government elections would begin after Eid-ul-Fitr.

Following the fall of the Awami League government amid the 2024 mass uprising, the interim government removed elected representatives from district councils, city corporations, upazila parishads, and municipalities. These bodies have since been run by government officials on additional charge for around one and a half years, while administrators were also appointed to city corporations.

After assuming power, the BNP appointed new administrators to six city corporations in the first phase and to five more in the second phase. All appointees are BNP leaders.

At a press briefing on Saturday, Jamaat Assistant Secretary General Hamidur Rahman Azad criticised the move, saying that appointing administrators could delay elections and create "a new trap of conspiracy for election engineering", raising questions among the public.

A senior Jamaat leader said party figures who could not contest the parliamentary polls due to the alliance arrangement may get priority in the local government elections.

NON-PARTY SYMBOLS

In 2015, the AL government amended five laws to introduce polls with party identities and symbols at five tiers of local government.

After taking office, the interim government scrapped this provision for city corporation, district council, upazila parishad, municipality, and union parishad polls. An ordinance to this effect is expected to be placed in parliament, and if passed, local elections will no longer be held under party symbols.

Jamaat leaders support the change, arguing that local and national elections differ in nature and that the absence of party symbols would allow voters greater freedom in choosing candidates.

JU student

FROM PAGE 2

"Initially, we suspect that she was murdered. An autopsy will be conducted, and we have already started an investigation," added the OC.

Meanwhile, police have taken Fahim into custody as the main suspect in the incident, Saidul Islam, OC of the Detective Branch (North) of Dhaka district police, told The Daily Star around 10:00pm.

"We are certain that Sharmin Jahan has been killed. At this moment, her husband is our main suspect. He is being interrogated in police custody."

Govt asks banks to write them off

FROM PAGE 12

owned banks.

The directive further states that once the government takes responsibility for the waived amounts, banks must immediately withdraw cases filed against the farmers and ensure that they do not face any harassment.

Banks will also have to report information on case withdrawals every month to the Financial Institutions Division through BB.

According to the directive, uncharged interest for the period after interest was imposed will be waived by banks subject to approval from their respective boards of directors.

The central bank will complete

audits of the relevant information in phases following due procedures. The final audited accounts will then be sent to the government in stages, based on which the government will pay the verified portion of the liabilities to the respective banks, the directive said.

It added that if, after payment, it is discovered that any bank has received more money from the government than its actual liability, the bank will be required to immediately refund the excess amount, along with interest if imposed by the government.

Around 12 lakh farmers are expected to benefit from the waiver.

In its first formal cabinet meeting in February, the government approved a proposal to waive agricultural

loans of up to Tk 10,000, including interest, as part of the ruling BNP's election pledge.

The waiver will apply to loans taken in the grain, crop, fisheries, and livestock sectors, in line with the government's election manifesto, Cabinet Secretary Nasimul Ghani told reporters after the meeting.

According to the BNP manifesto, the government will also pay one year's instalments of microloans taken by farmers from NGOs registered with the Microcredit Regulatory Authority.

The main objective of the initiative is to ensure social security for poor and marginal farmers and strengthen the backbone of the country's agricultural sector, Ghani said.

PM launches nationwide drive today

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to the Balrampur Sahapara area to launch the programme.

In its manifesto, the BNP has plans to excavate and restore around 20,000 kilometres of rivers and canals across the country.

Ministry officials said the programme is expected to significantly improve irrigation facilities by making better use of stored surface water, increasing agricultural productivity and creating employment opportunities for rural communities.

They also said the project will help

reduce reliance on groundwater, which is depleting in many parts of the country.

Improved water management through canal restoration is also expected to help mitigate drought, flooding and waterlogging in different regions, officials added.

Meanwhile, Tarique's visit has created considerable enthusiasm among BNP leaders, activists, farmers and local residents in Dinajpur.

Soon after inaugurating the canal excavation programme, the prime minister will distribute Black Bengal

goats to five beneficiaries selected from a group of 25 recipients at the same event, said Dinajpur Deputy Commissioner Rafiqul Islam.

Later in the day, Tarique Rahman will visit the Faridpur graveyard in the Dinajpur district town, where he will pay respects at the graves of his grandfather, Md Iskander Majumder; grandmother, Taiba Majumder; aunt, Khurshid Jahan Haque; and other family members.

[Our correspondent from Thakurgaon contributed to this report.]

Govt appoints BNP leaders

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appointees are BNP leaders from central and district committees.

Of the total appointments, 11 administrators are central-level BNP leaders, while 31 are district-level party leaders.

A review of the political background of the appointees shows that around 19 percent had lost the Feb 12 election to Jamaat-e-Islami alliance candidates, while around 2 percent lost to rebel candidates from their own party.

Another 2 percent had withdrawn their nominations in favour of allied candidates, according to party sources.

BNP sources familiar with the process said loyalty to the party and participation in previous elections were important factors in preparing the final list.

The newly appointed administrators are: Mohammad Touhidul Islam in Panchagarh, Mofazzal Hossain Dulal in Dinajpur, Mohammad Saiful Islam in Rangpur, Md Sohel Hossain Kaykobad in Kurigram, Prof Dr Syed Moinul Hasan Sadiq in Gaibandha, Md Masud Rana Pradhan in Joypurhat, AKM Ahasanul Tayyeb Zakir in Bogura, Md Harunur Rashid in Chapainawabganj, Md Abu Bakkar Siddique in Naogaon, Md Ershad Ali in Rajshahi, Md Rahim Newaz in Natore, Md Javed Masud in Meherpur, Sohrab Uddin in Kushtia, Md Abul Majid in Jhenaidah, Delwar Hossain Khan Khokon in Jashore, Ali Ahmed in Magura, Sheikh Mohammad Zakir Hossain in Bagerhat, SM Monirul Hasan (Bappi) in Khulna, Snehangshu Sarkar in Patuakhali, Golam Nabi Alamgir in Bhola, Akon Kuddusur Rahman

in Barishal, Md Shahadat Hossain in Jhalakathi, Alamgir Hossain in Pirojpur, SM Obaidul Haque in Tangail, ABM Mamunur Rashid in Sherpur, Syed Emran Saleh in Mymensingh, Adv Md Nuruzzaman in Netrokona, Khaled Saifullah Sohel Khan in Kishoreganj, AKM Iradat in Munshiganj, Md Mamun Mahmud in Narayanganj, Abdus Salam Mia in Rajbari, Sharif Rafiq Uzzaman in Gopalganj, Khondkar Mashukur Rahman in Madaripur, Sardar AKM Nasir Uddin in Shariatpur, Md Mizanur Rahman Chowdhury in Sunamganj, Abul Kaber Chowdhury in Sylhet, Mizanur Rahman in Moulvibazar, Sirajul Islam in Brahmanbaria, Md Moshak Mia in Cumilla, Md Harunur Rashid Azad in Noakhali, Sahab Uddin in Lakshmipur and ATM Nurul Bashir Chowdhury in Cox's Bazar.



Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh

Bangladesh Police

Office of the Superintendent of Police, Tangail

e-Tender Notice

e-Tender is being invited for the purpose of appointing contractor for the procurement of High quality Lentils, Fortified Soybean Oil, Polao Rice, Supply of Labour and Transport, Wheat Crushing, 'Firewood' for distribution to Tangail district Police and other Ration recipients during the 4th quarter of the 2025-2026 Financial year (April-2026 to June-2026) and auction of old empty jute and plastic sacks kept in ration store, Tangail.

1.	Ministry/Department	Ministry of Home Affairs									
2.	Department/Organization	Bangladesh Police									
3.	Name of the collecting entity	Superintendent of Police, Tangail									
4.	District of the collecting entity	Tangail									
5.	Memo No & Date	101/PRS, Date: 15/03/2026									
6.	Tender procedure	OTM									
7.	Budget	Government									
8.	Last Date and Time of tender Sale	Date: 05/04/2026 14.30									
9.	Tender Closing Date and Time	Date: 05/04/2026 15.00									
10.	Tender opening Date and Time	Date: 05/04/2026 15.00									
11.	Eligibility of Tenderers	As per tender notice & TDS									
12.	Tender Package description										
Package Name		Tender ID	Tender Document Price	Tender Security	Potential Quantity	Time Period					
Procurement of high quality packaged Lentils (MUSUR DAL) for the financial Year 2025-2026(4th Quarter) at District Police ration store, Tangail.		1246204	2500/-	3,50,000/-	80000 KG	April-2026 to June-2026					
Procurement of high quality "Soybean Oil" for the financial Year 2025-2026 (4th Quarter) at District Police ration store, Tangail.		1246170	2500/-	4,00,000/-	80000 Liters						
Procurement of high quality "Polao Rice" for the financial Year 2025-2026 (4th Quarter) at District Police ration store, Tangail.		1246157	500/-	15,000/-	3500 KG						
Wheat Crushing Supplied from Government Silos for Ration for the financial Year 2025-2026 (4th Quarter) at District Police ration store, Tangail.		1245971	1500/-	1,00,000/-	3,30,000 KG						
Transportation of goods carrying (Ration Items-Rice & Sugar) including Coolie (Loading/Unloading) for the financial year 2025-2026 (4th Quarter) at District Police ration store, Tangail.		1245939	500/-	20,000/-	4100 Quintel						
Procurement of "Firewood" (Mango Wood) Dry (Chopped)" for the financial Year 2025-2026 (4th Quarter) at District Police ration store, Tangail.		1245837	500/-	5,000/-	16000 KG						
Sale of old empty jute and plastic sacks kept in ration store, Tangail. (October/2025 to March/2026)		Auction	500/-	10,000/-	Subject to availability	Out of e-GP tender (collect & dropped schedule physically)					
13.	Name and designation of the officer inviting tenders	Mohammad Shamsul Alam Sarkar Superintendent of Police, Tangail district.									
14.	Special instructions	All the rules/regulations of Public Procurement Act, 2006 and Amended Public Procurement Rules-2025 shall be deemed as the conditions of the tender. The Authority reserves the right to accept or reject any tender and is not bound to accept the lowest tender. Other conditions are mentioned in the tender schedule. A contractor can purchase only One tender schedule in the name of his own organization.									
This is an Online tender, where only e-tender will be accepted in the national e-GP portal and no off-line/Hard copies will be accepted. To submit e-tender, registration in the national e-GP 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 through online at any branches of Registered bank. Further information and guide lines are available in national e-GP system portal and from e-GP help desk (helpdesk@procure.gov.bd)											
 (Mohammad Shamsul Alam Sarkar) BP-7506118407 Superintendent of Police, Tangail Phone: 029977-14940 Fax: 029977-51805 E-mail: sptangail@police.gov.bd											



B-R Powergen Ltd.

(A Government-Owned Power Generation Company)

IEB Bhaban (8th Floor), 8/A, Ramna, Dhaka

Memo No. 27.31.0000.002.61.001.18.84

Date: 15 March 2026

Re-Advertisement

CAREER OPPORTUNITY

B-R Powergen Ltd. (BRPL), a Government-Owned Public Limited Company under Power Division, Ministry of Power, Energy and Mineral Resources is inviting applications from the qualified and energetic Bangladeshi nationals for the following post:

Sl No.	Name of Post	Basic Salary	BRPL Pay Grade	No. of Post
01.	Executive Director (Finance & Accounts)	BDT. 1,49,000/-	Pay Grade-2	01

Job Description

The Executive Director(Finance & Accounts) is the Chief Financial Officer of the company reporting to the Managing Director for establishing and maintaining an efficient accounting system in the company. He/She is responsible for managing finance and accounts of the company in a foolproof manner, to prepare financial statements, financial plans and budget consistent to operation, maintenance and development of the company; to ensure that the income of the company has been correctly billed, realized and recorded; to ensure that payments are appropriately made and recorded; to ensure statutory audit of the company as directed by the board; to visit the plants and advise on financial and cost reduction matters; report to the Managing Director and the Board on financial matters, to ensure an efficient and effective financial planning to serve debt, generate adequate revenue for investment and any other duties assigned by the authority from time to time.

Educational Qualification and Requirements

- At least MBA/M.Com in Finance/Accounting from any recognized university, Professional qualification such as ACA/ACMA will be counted as an added advantage;
- Candidates passed in the grading system must possess at least CGPA 3.5 on a scale of 5.0 and CGPA 2.5 on a scale of 4.0. Candidates passed in the conventional system (Class/Division) must possess at least 2nd class/division. No third Division/Class at any stage of the academic career shall be acceptable;
- In case of Public Sector (GoB/SOE's/Autonomous Bodies), the candidate should have at least 18 years of experience of which at least 3 years in a senior management position (National Pay Scales substantive grade 4 & above);
- In case of State-owned companies (SOCs), the candidate should have at least 18 years of experience, of which at least 3 years in a senior management position (DGM or equivalent & above);
- In case of private sector, the candidate should have at least 18 years of experience, of which 3 years in senior management/leadership position in well reputed organization(s) in power sector. Moreover, the candidate's experience certificate must include detailed job responsibilities authorized by competent authority;
- Must be able to demonstrate knowledge about relevant Govt. rules & regulations, PPA and PPR, etc;
- Must be able to demonstrate knowledge in business laws, labor law, Tax/VAT laws, Total Quality Management (TQM), Total Productive Management (TPM), Corporate Governance, Strategic Management, etc.;
- Must demonstrate strong participatory leadership ability and possess adequate knowledge in Corporate Management;
- Able to express information, in both English and Bangla, to individual or groups effectively; make clear and convincing presentations, write concisely, and convincingly for his/her intended audience;
- Strong business acumen with a deep understanding of financial management, procurement, strategic planning, and operational management.
- Excellent negotiation skills with government agencies, development partners and private investors will be an advantage.

Age Limit: Between 45-60 years of age as on 15-04-2026.

Tenure of Appointment

The initial contract will be for 3 years. It can be extended for two more terms of 3 years subject to the maximum age limit of 65 years in case of competent candidate.

Salary and Allowances

Basic pay BDT. 1,49,000/- (One lac forty-nine thousand) only per month plus house rent 50% of basic pay, 2(two) festivals bonus, Boishakhi allowance (20% of basic) per year, gratuity, contributory provident fund, group insurance, leave encashment, reimbursement of medical expenses and other fringe benefits will be admissible as per provisions of the company. He/She will also be entitled to a full-time transport with fuel and driver. Income tax shall be paid by the incumbent.

Submission of Application

- Candidates should apply through specific application form (available at www.brpowergen.gov.bd), with 3 copies of passport size photographs, NID, Photocopies of all educational certificates and professional/Job experience certificates;
- Original copies of all educational and professional/Job experience certificates shall be verified during the viva-voce;
- Candidates still serving in GoB/SOE's/Autonomous bodies/SOCs should attach an NOC (No Objection Certificate) from the authority;
- Application (hard copy) must be submitted on or before 15-04-2026 within office hour to the Company Secretary, B-R Powergen Ltd. (BRPL);

Please note that only short-listed candidates will be called for interview. No fee is required for submitting this application. No TA/DA will be given for participating.

The authority of BRPL reserves the right to accept or reject any or all the applications without assigning any reasons whatsoever.

"Note: Candidates who have submitted their applications earlier need not apply again".



Md. Zahangir Alam, FCS
Company Secretary
Email: cs@brpowergen.gov.bd

GD-601



Jalalabad Gas Transmission & Distribution System Ltd.

(A Company of Petrobangla)

(Gas Bhaban, Mendibag, Sylhet-3100)

গ্যাস ব্যবহারে সতর্কতা বোন এবং সময়মত গ্যাস বিল পরিশোধ করুন

বিনা কারণে গ্যাসের চুলা জ্বালিয়ে রাখা আর বিপদকে ডাকা একই বিষয়

Ref. No: 28.16.9100.098.07.002.26.631

Date: 15 March, 2026

e-Tender Notice

This is to notify all concerned that the following International Tender published through the National e-GP portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) as stated below:

SL. No.	Tender ID, Package No & Tender Publication Date	Description of Goods	Tender Document Last Selling Date & Time	Tender Closing Date & Time	Tender Opening Date & Time
01.	Tender ID: 1244223 Tender Package No: 28.16.9100.098.07.002.26.631 Tender Publication Date: 12-March-2026 Time: 16:00	Procurement of API 5L ERW Line Pipe & Casing Pipe	26-Apr-2026 Time: 17:00	27-Apr-2026 Time: 15:00	27-Apr-2026 Time: 15:00

This is an Online tender, where only e-Tenders will be accepted in the National e-GP portal and no offline/hard copy will be accepted. Interested Tenderers may Visit the website <http://www.eprocure.gov.bd> to obtain the detailed tender notice and Tender Documents.

To submit an e-Tender, Registration in the National e-GP portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) is required. The fees for downloading the e-Tender Documents from the National e-GP system portal have must be deposited online through any Bank's registered with the e-GP System.

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

(Engr. Md. Masud Rana)
Deputy General Manager (Procurement Department)
E-mail: dgm.procurement@jgtgsl.gov.bd

GD-605

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh

Office of the Executive Engineer

Habiganj PWD Division

Habiganj

☎ 02996605290, ☎ 0831-54210

E-mail: ee_hobi@pwd.gov.bd

Reference No. 337

Date: 15/03/2026

e-Tender Notice

e-Tender are invited in e-GP System Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) by Executive Engineer, Habiganj PWD Division, Habiganj for the procurement of:

Sl No.	Description of work & Package No.	Tender ID No.	Tender publication date	Last selling date & time	Tender submission deadline & opening date & time
1	Construction of 5-Storeyed National Security Intelligence (NSI) Building (Five-Storeyed Foundation), 2 (two)-Storeyed Barrack building with substation & Garage (in/c Civil, sanitary, drain, Road, Boundary wall, Guard Shade, Internal & External Electrification etc.) at Habiganj	1243428	15-Mar-2026 11:00am	01-Apr-2026 16:00pm	02-Apr-2026 12:00pm
2	Renovation and repair of the record room established in the Office of the Deputy Commissioner, Habiganj under the project titled "Renovation and Repair of Record Rooms Established in the Office of the Deputy Commissioner" (Sub-head: Civil, Sanitary, Internal Electrical Renovation and Repair Work of the Record Room Building and Protection Arrangements from Rats and Insects)	1246456	15-Mar-2026 11:00am	29-Mar-2026 16:00pm	30-Mar-2026 12:00pm

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



Executive Engineer
Habiganj PWD Division
Habiganj

GD-603



Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh

Office of the Inspector General

Bangladesh Police

Police Headquarters, Dhaka

Invitation for International Tender

Memo No. 44.01.0000.058.07.019.25/296

Date: 15/03/2026

Sealed tenders are hereby invited from the Manufacturers/suppliers in their official pad for supply of following items as required by Bangladesh Police in FY 2025-2026.

1	Ministry/Division	Ministry of Home Affairs.
2	Agency	Bangladesh Police.
3	Procuring entity name	AIG (Arms & Ammunition), Bangladesh Police.
4	Invitation for	To Purchase 1) Crew Served Machine Gun for Bangladesh Police
5	Invitation Ref. No.	44.01.0000.058.07.019.25/07(2025-2026)
6	Date	15/03/2026

Key Information

7	Procurement method	One Stage Two Envelope (International Tender)
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Funding Information

8	Budget and source of funds	Revenue Budget (GOB)
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Particular Information

9	Tender publication date	16 March 2026
10	Tender last selling date	27 April 2026
11	Tender closing date and time	28 April 2026 at 12.00 hrs
12	Tender opening date and time (Technical offer only)	28 April 2026 at 12.30 hrs.

Name & address of the office

13	Name & address of the office	Bangladesh Police, Police Headquarters, 6, Phoenix Road, Fulbaria, Dhaka.
	Selling tender document	AIG (Arms & Ammunition), Bangladesh Police, Police Headquarters, Dhaka.
	Receiving tender document	AIG (Arms & Ammunition), Bangladesh Police, Police Headquarters, Dhaka.
	Opening tender document	NCCOM Building (Conference Room 2nd Floor), Bangladesh Police, Police Headquarters, Dhaka.
14	Place/date/time of pre-tender meeting (optional)	06 April 2026, at 12.00 hrs. NCCOM Building (Conference Room 2nd Floor), Bangladesh Police, Police Headquarters, Dhaka.

INFORMATION FOR TENDERER

15	Eligibility of tenderer	1) Up-to-date export license 2) Written confirmation authorizing the signatory of the tender in accordance with the Memorandum of Association and Articles of Association of the Principal 3) Provide the legal and financial capacity of the tenderer with affidavit 4) Original full Brochure of products of the Principal 5) Other requirements are described in the standard tender document (PG SA).
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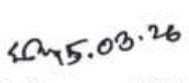
16	Brief description of goods.	Quantity	Price of tender document (non-refundable)	Tender security in (USD)	Completion time (Date of Opening of L/C)
1.	Crew Served Machine Gun	25 Pcs	12,000/-	28,000.00 USD	120 days

Procuring Entity Details

17	Name of the official inviting the tender	Md. Moniruzzaman, BPM-Sheba
18	Designation of the official inviting the tender	Assistant Inspector General (Arms & Ammunition)
19	Address of official inviting the tender	Assistant Inspector General (Arms & Ammunition), Room No. 315 (2nd Floor), 6, Phoenix Road, Police Headquarters, Dhaka.
20	Contact details of official inviting the tender	Phone: 02-47120270, Fax: 02-55101641, E-mail: aiga_a@police.gov.bd & aigarmsbd@gmail.com
21	The tenderers shall submit their Technical and Financial offer in separate sealed envelope. Furthermore both envelopes shall be covered by an outer envelope which is sealed.	

Special instructions

22	a) No tender will be received after the deadline of submission time & date. b) The procuring entity reserves the right to reject all tenders or annul the tender process without assigning any reason. c) The procuring entity also reserves the right to omit, increase and/or decrease the quantity of any item(s) of the tender. d) If not possible to receive/open the tender on the scheduled date for any unavoidable circumstance, the same will be received/opened on the next working date at the same time & same venue. e) Evaluation will be on item by item basis. f) Date of financial offer opening will be duly informed to the Technically Responsive Tenderers and their local agents. g) The Tenderer must comply with all requirements as per the tender data sheet provided with the tender schedule. h) The Tender Security shall be in the form of an irrevocable bank guarantee issued by an internationally reputable bank and shall require to be endorsed by its any correspondent bank located in Bangladesh. i) The Procurement will be performed according to the Public Procurement Act-2006 and Public Procurement Regulation 2025.	
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Md. Moniruzzaman BPM-Sheba
BP-7806119738
Assistant Inspector General (Arms & Ammunition)
For Inspector General, Bangladesh Police
Police Headquarters, Dhaka
Phone: 02-47120270, Fax: 02-55101641
E-mail: aiga_a@police.gov.bd & aigarmsbd@gmail.com

GD-613

Police to probe

FROM PAGE 3
(reserve office inspector). They have been tasked with examining several allegations related to the recruitment process.

One issue under investigation is whether candidates from other districts secured jobs by using false addresses and were treated as permanent residents based solely on land purchases in the recruiting district.

The committees will also examine allegations that some candidates were allowed to sit recruitment examinations in separate rooms under the supervision of special police members in exchange for unethical benefits.

Another matter under review is whether candidates were declared eligible or ineligible for recruitment based on their own or their family members' political affiliations.

Investigators will also scrutinise irregularities

between written and oral examination scores, including cases where candidates who scored low in written tests allegedly secured jobs after receiving unusually high marks in oral examinations.

They will further investigate allegations of question paper leaks and assess whether authorities took action against dishonest police personnel, broker networks, fraud rings, or others who may have disrupted the examination process.

The directive was sent to superintendents of police in all districts, according to the order forwarded for implementation by Additional DIG (Recruitment and Career Planning-1) Md Abu Hasan at PHQ.

Another PHQ official said the decision followed various allegations of irregularities in recruitment during the tenure of the Awami League government.

Largely ceremonial

FROM PAGE 3
couldn't buy many books," she said. "But if I hadn't come at all, it would have felt like missing out on something important."

According to information collected from 269 participating publishers, total sales during the 17-day fair stood at around Tk 8 crore.

The fair hosted 584 participating institutions, including 570 publishing houses. Based on the available data, the fair management committee estimated that total sales across all publishers would reach about Tk 17 crore.

Selim Reza, member secretary of the fair management committee, said in many cases publishers with fewer stall units recorded higher sales than those with larger stalls.

Mahrukh Mohiuddin, managing director of The University Press Limited,

said the overall sales situation was alarming.

"Compared with normal years, book sales this year were about 70 percent lower," he said. "Nearly 90 percent of participating publishers could not even recover the basic cost of building their stalls. Around 30 percent sold books worth less than Tk 5,000."

He said the decline is part of an ongoing trend. "Political and economic instability already reduced sales at the 2025 fair by about 60 percent compared to 2024," he said. "This year, the situation worsened further. In fact, the business environment was worse than during the pandemic-era fair of 2021."

According to the fair's information centre, 2,007 new books were submitted during the event, though the actual number may be higher as not all publishers deposit copies of their books with the centre.

‘Coordinated campaign’ against unarmed

FROM PAGE 4
It said the involvement of senior officials and police officers – entrusted with protecting lives – amounted to a profound betrayal of public trust and aggravated the crimes to the highest degree.

Seven senior officials – including former deputy inspector general Syed Nurul Islam and former superintendent of police Md Asaduzzaman Ripon – were sentenced to life imprisonment under the doctrine of command responsibility for failing to prevent or punish

crimes committed by their subordinates.

Two others received prison terms, while former police sub-inspector Sheikh Abzalul Haque was acquitted after testifying as an approver.

According to the judgment, the violence occurred in Ashulia and Bypail on August 4–5, 2024.

On August 4, armed cadres led by Saiful Islam and local police allegedly opened fire on around 800 students, killing protester Md Shahabul Islam.

The violence escalated the next day after the fall of the

Awami League government.

As a victory procession approached Ashulia Police Station, police and Awami League men opened indiscriminate fire, leaving at least 29 people dead.

Witnesses said police later collected blood-soaked bodies, loaded them onto a pedal van and moved them to a police pickup truck, where they were doused with petrol and set on fire.

The tribunal found that at least one victim was still alive when the fire was ignited.

A one-minute-14-second viral video showing officers dragging bodies and piling

them into a van beside the police station wall was presented as key evidence.

Forensic experts confirmed the footage had not been manipulated using artificial intelligence.

DNA tests by the Criminal Investigation Department identified several victims, including Md Omar Faruk and Abul Hossain.

The tribunal also ordered the government to confiscate the convicts' assets and create a compensation fund for victims' families and protesters who suffered permanent disabilities.



Government of the Peoples Republic of Bangladesh
Office of the District controller of stores (Stores Section), Pahartali
Bangladesh Railway
Pahartali, Chattogram.
e-mail: dcospt@railway.gov.bd



No: 54.01.1543.122.07.018.25
Date: 11.03.2026

e-Tender Notice No. 03/2025-26

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

Tender ID	Package No.	Description of Goods and Tender Method	Tender Publication Date and Time	Tender Document Last Selling/Downloading Date and Time	Last Date and Time for Tender Security Submission	Tender/proposal Closing and Opening Date and Time
1240753	54.01.1543.122.07.018.25	Procurement of Dress for Grade 11-16 & Grade 17-20 Staff. OTM (NCT)	16.03.2026 11:00	12.04.2026 16:00	13.04.2026 11:00	13.04.2026 11:30
1244638	54.01.1543.122.07.019.25	Procurement of Desktop Computer and Laptop. OTM (NCT)	16.03.2026 11:00	12.04.2026 16:00	13.04.2026 11:00	13.04.2026 12:10
1244792	54.01.1543.122.07.020.25	Procurement of Offset Paper and Gala. OTM (NCT)	16.03.2026 11:00	12.04.2026 16:00	13.04.2026 11:00	13.04.2026 12:20
1244865	54.01.1543.122.07.021.25	Procurement of Office Stationery Items and Other Accessories. OTM (NCT)	16.03.2026 11:00	12.04.2026 16:00	13.04.2026 11:00	13.04.2026 12:30

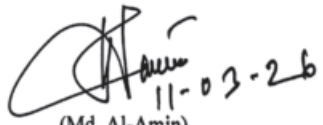
These are online Tenders, where only e-Tender will be accepted in the National e-GP Portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted.

To submit e-Tender, registration in the National e-GP system portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) is mandatory.

The fees for downloading the e-Tender Documents from the National e-GP System Portal have to be deposited online through any registered Banks' branches.

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

এস(২৬)(২১৭)


(Md. Al-Amin)
District controller of stores (Stores Section), Pahartali
Bangladesh Railway, Chattogram.

GD-617

One dies, another goes missing in storm

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Lalmonirhat

A boatman died and another person went missing after being caught in a storm and hailstorm in Chilmari upazila of Kurigram on Saturday night.

The deceased -- Mintu Mia, 41 -- was from Gazirpara village.

Farid Uddin, 43, of the same area, remained missing in the incident that took place at Gazirpara boat ghat in Chilmari.

Locals said shortly after the Taraweeh prayers on Saturday night, a sudden strong storm began. At that time, Mintu Mia went to the Gazirpara boat ghat to tie his boat safely.

There he was caught in the storm and went missing. Later his body was recovered from a sandbar in the Brahmaputra River.

Everyone at the ghat managed to move quickly to safer places, but Farid Uddin, who was present there, did not return.

No trace of Farid Uddin had been found until yesterday afternoon.

In-Charge of Chilmari River Police Outpost, Golam Mawla Shah, said the river police are assisting locals in the rescue efforts.



বিসিএসআইআর চট্টগ্রাম গবেষণাগার
বাংলাদেশ বিজ্ঞান ও শিল্প গবেষণা পরিষদ
"জীবনের জন্য বিজ্ঞান"

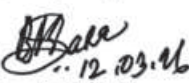
Issue No: 39.02.1506.068.17.043.26/
Date: 12-03-2026

e-Tender Notice (OTM)

e-Tender is invited in the national e-GP system Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) for the procurement of following Tender ID.

Sl. NO	Tender ID No.	Name Of Tender	Last Date and Time for Tender Selling	Last Date and Time for Tender Closing	Date and Time for Tender Opeing
01.	1241288	Renovation work of Rooms No. 217 and 226 of the Industrial Microbiology Division at Bangladesh Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (BCSIR), Chattogram, in accordance with ISO standards.	31-March-2026 16:00	01-April-2026 16:00	01-April-2026 16:00
02.	1241294	Renovation and other related works of various rooms of the Hydrogen Energy Lab at Bangladesh Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (BCSIR), Chattogram Research Laboratory.	31-March-2026 16:00	01-April-2026 16:00	01-April-2026 16:00
03.	1241295	Renovation and repair works of the rooms of the Chief Scientific Officers at Bangladesh Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (BCSIR), Chattogram Research Laboratory.	31-March-2026 16:00	01-April-2026 16:00	01-April-2026 16:00

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.


(Dr. Barun Kanti Saha)
Director (Additional In-charge)
BCSIR Chattogram Laboratories
Chattogram-4220

GD-610

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change
Bangladesh Climate Change Trust (BCCT)
Old Ban Bhaban (5th and 6th Floor)
101, Mohakhali, Dhaka-1212
www.bcct.gov.bd

Request for Expression of Interest (EoI)

1	Ministry/Division	Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change
2	Agency	Bangladesh Climate Change Trust
3	Project name	Project on "Combating the Adverse Impacts of Climate Change through Awareness Raising and Training".
4	Procuring entity name	Managing Director, Bangladesh Climate Change Trust (BCCT)
5	EoI Ref No. and date	Ref. No. 22.06.0000.123.31.142.2025-25; Dated: 16-03-2026
6	Procuring entity district	Dhaka, Bangladesh
7	Expression of Interest Selection for	Hiring a Consulting Firm to Conduct a Study on Adverse Climate Impacts and Public Awareness, Develop Training Manuals, and Organize Workshops, Training Sessions, and National-Level Seminars under the "Combating the Adverse Impacts of Climate Change through Awareness Raising and Training" project.
KEY INFORMATION		
8	Procurement method	OCBS METHOD
FUNDING INFORMATION		
9	Budget and source of funds	Bangladesh Climate Change Trust Fund
PARTICULAR INFORMATION		
10	EoI publication date	16-03-2026
11	EoI submission date & time	With all supporting document at or before 1.00pm on 15.04.2026
12	EoI opening date & time	15-04-2026, 01.30pm
INFORMATION FOR APPLICANT		
13	Title of service	Hiring a Consulting Firm to Conduct a Study on Adverse Climate Impacts and Public Awareness, Develop Training Manuals, and Organize Workshops, Training Sessions, and National-Level Seminars under the "Combating the Adverse Impacts of Climate Change through Awareness Raising and Training" project.
14	No. of service (firm)	01 (One)
15	Brief description of the assignment	This project aims to build awareness and strengthen capacity to face the adverse impacts of climate change. Through training, workshops, and information sharing, it will engage students, government officials, civil society, NGOs, advance/innovative farmers and environmentalists. The initiative focuses on capacity building, disaster management, and knowledge exchange to reduce risks and help communities adapt to climate challenges. [See details Terms of Reference (ToR), published in www.bcct.gov.bd]
16	Eligibility and required documents	1. Minimum 10 years of experience in preparing training manuals, climate study and public awareness, conducting training, workshop and seminar in national level 2. The firm must show academic linkage with foreign/national universities/government/semi govt. research institutes, in the field of climate change, with particular emphasis on adverse climate impacts and public awareness. 3. A detailed list of professionals and experts who will be working on this project having the criteria as per the required qualifications and experience in ToR. Preference will be given to a team with international professional/expert. 4. The team must consist of at least 01(one) professional/expert in each area which was described in the ToR. 5. Reasonably acceptable organizational profile. 6. Evidence of permanent office in Bangladesh, Evidence of updated trade license, income tax clearance certificate, TIN number, BIN number and proof of VAT submission status.
17	Location	1. Coastal Area: Satkhira, Khulna, Bagerhat, Patuakhali, Barguna, Bhola, Jhalokati, Barishal, Pirojpur, Cox's Bazar, Noakhali, Lakshimpur, Feni, Chandpur. 2. Haor Area: Sunamganj, Sylhet, Habiganj, Moulvibazar, Kishoreganj, Netrokona, Brahmanbaria, Mymensingh 3. Northern Area: Rajshahi, Naogaon, Chapainawabganj, Pabna, Natore, Bogura, Rangpur, Kurigram, Gaibandha, Lalmonirhat
PROCURING ENTITY DETAILS		
18	Place of opening EoI document	Office of the Project Director, Bangladesh Climate Change Trust (BCCT), Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC), Old Ban Bhaban (6th Floor), Room No. 703, 101, Mohakhali, Dhaka-1212
19	Name of official inviting EoI	Dr. Muhammad Nuzmul Hoque
20	Designation of official inviting EoI	Director (Deputy Secretary) and Project Director of the Project "Project on Combating the Adverse Impacts of Climate Change through Awareness Raising and Training"
21	Address of official inviting EoI	Bangladesh Climate Change Trust (BCCT), Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC), Old Ban Bhaban (6th Floor), Room No. 703, 101, Mohakhali, Dhaka-1212
22	Contact details of official inviting EoI	Tel: +8802222282593, Email: dir-pdn@bcct.gov.bd
23	Special condition:	(a) Consulting Firm will be selected in accordance with PPA-2006, PPR-2025 and Public Procurement Procedures issued by BPPA. (b) The Expression of Interest (EoI) shall be submitted in sealed envelope, delivered to the address of undersigned. The procuring entity reserves the right to accept or reject any proposal or all EoI's without assigning any reason whatsoever.


Dr. Muhammad Nuzmul Hoque
Director (Deputy Secretary)
and
Project Director

GD-598

Star SPORT

DHAKA MONDAY MARCH 16, 2026, CHAITRA 2, 1432 BS

“It’s (title race) not over. Who said that? We didn’t lose. We will continue. Nine points is a lot against Arsenal but it happened. We have the game at home (vs Arsenal) so we have to try until the end. When it’s not possible then we congratulate the champion but we have to try.”

Man City manager **Pep Guardiola** after his side lost points in a 1-1 draw at West Ham



Miraz relieved after tense win

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh skipper Mehidy Hasan Miraz admitted he felt the pressure but praised his players for keeping their composure as the Tigers edged Pakistan by 11 runs in a thrilling third and final ODI at the Sher-e-Bangla National Cricket Stadium yesterday to seal a 2-1 series victory.

Bangladesh appeared well on course after posting 290 for five and reducing Pakistan to 209 for seven in the 40th over. However, Salman Agha struck a superb 106 off 98 balls and shared a 52-run stand with Shaheen Shah Afridi for the eighth wicket to drag the visitors back into the contest.

Pacer Taskin Ahmed, Bangladesh’s standout bowler with figures of 4-49, eventually removed Agha to ease the pressure. Afridi then launched a late assault, reducing the equation to 14 runs from the final over.

Leg spinner Rishad Hossain, who had conceded 54 runs in his first six overs, delivered a nerveless final over, giving away just two runs before dismissing Afridi. Pakistan were bundled out for 279 on the last ball of the innings, with Afridi stumped by Litton Das after scoring 37 off 38 balls.

The victory also lifted Bangladesh to ninth in the ODI rankings, leapfrogging the West Indies cricket team and strengthening their hopes of direct qualification for the ICC Cricket World Cup 2027.

Miraz admitted the tense finish tested the team’s nerves but credited his players for holding firm.

“It was an excellent match. At times even I was a bit afraid, but the boys handled the pressure really well in the last over when they needed 14 runs,” Miraz said during the post-match presentation.

He also praised opener Tanzid Hasan Tamim, whose maiden ODI century – a run-a-ball 107 – laid the platform for the total.

“I think it was an excellent wicket. If we could have got 300 it would have been even better, but 290 was still a good score. The way Tamim batted was excellent,” he said.



PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED

Pakistan’s Shaheen Shah Afridi gets stumped by Bangladesh wicketkeeper Litton Das during the tense series decider of the three-match ODI series at the Sher-e-Bangla National Cricket Stadium yesterday. Shaheen had sparked another scare for the hosts after Salman Agha kept Pakistan in the hunt with a 98-ball 106. Following Agha’s dismissal in the 48th over, Shaheen smashed Mustafizur Rahman for 14 runs in the penultimate over, including two sixes, leaving Pakistan needing 14 more to clinch the series. With momentum on the left-hander’s side, the contest hung in the balance. But leg-spinner Rishad Hossain held his nerve, conceding just two runs off the first five balls of the final over and dismissing Shaheen (37 off 28) with the last delivery.

Tanzid dispels personal demons in first ODI ton

SPORTS REPORTER

A six over long off saw Tanzid Hasan Tamim reach the magic number, his first-ever ODI ton in his 31st appearance, and the look on his face said it all.

As the ball sailed over the fence, he celebrated with outstretched hands, relieved over finally making a start count, and that too in a crucial series-deciding third ODI against Pakistan yesterday at the Sher-e-Bangla National Cricket Stadium.

The 23-year-old has been under the scanner for almost his entire ODI career. Debuting in August 2023 in the Asia Cup, Tanzid’s first few innings did not merit a chance at that year’s ICC ODI World Cup but when Tamim Iqbal stepped aside, his stars aligned.

That World Cup turned into a baptism of fire for the youngster, who played all nine games, but contributed just 145 runs at an average of 16.11 with one fifty.

His talent was evident, but so was his

inconsistency. A few flashy boundaries and a lapse of concentration resulting in dismissal – that’s how most of his knocks panned out.

There are also signs that he is more suited to the T20 format. In 45 T20Is, Tanzid has 11 fifties and quite a few times he helped the team get off to a flying start.

Yet, in ODIs, questions of temperament remained. He had five fifties before yesterday, and had never delivered a big score that set the tempo, especially when his team batted first.

Ahead of the Pakistan series, a 92 in the Bangladesh Cricket League (BCL) and a ton in the practice match saw him make the playing XI in the first ODI, where he hit a rapid 67.

However, that knock did little to dispel the doubts as it came in a paltry chase of 115. Tanzid did not help his case when he got out cheaply in the second ODI, chasing Pakistan’s 274.



In the series-deciding third ODI, Tanzid showed his flair and sustained it long enough to reach a career milestone.

A confident flick off Haris Rauf got him off the mark in the second over. In that very over, he dispatched Rauf for an effortless six over deep mid-wicket to set the tone.

Bangladesh moved smoothly with Tanzid scoring the bulk of the runs in a 105-run opening stand with Saif Hassan. A 53-run stand with Najmul Hossain Shanto followed, yet there was always the fear that Tanzid might lose his concentration.

After reaching his 80s, Tanzid bunkered down a bit and played risk-free shots to close in on the ton. However, after reaching 94, his natural instincts took over, as he lofted Salman Agha for a six to get his first international ton.

His innings ended on a run-a-ball 107 and it has handed Tanzid the blueprint on how to go about scoring tons in ODIs.

BRIEF SCORES

Bangladesh: 290 for five in 50 overs (Tanzid 107, Hridoy 48 not out; Haris 3-52, Abrar 1-49)

Pakistan: 279 all out in 50 overs (Agha 106, Masood 38; Taskin 4-49, Mustafizur Rahman 3-54)

Result: Bangladesh won by 11 runs

Bangladesh won series 2-1

Player of the series: Tanzid Tamim and Nahid Rana



YOUNGEST PL SCORERS

Max Dowman (Ars) – 16 years 73 days
James Vaughan (Eve) – 16 years 270 days
James Milner (Leeds) – 16 years 356 days
Wayne Rooney (Eve) – 16 years 360 days
Rio Ngumoha (Liv) – 16 years 361 days

Dowman PL’s youngest scorer

English midfielder Max Dowman became the youngest-ever goalscorer in the Premier League as the 16-year-old inspired Arsenal’s late surge to beat Everton 2-0 on Saturday and close in on a first Premier League title for 22 years. Arsenal then rested easy as Manchester City faltered again, dropping points in a 1-1 draw at relegation-threatened West Ham United. The Gunners have 70 points after 31 games, nine ahead of City, who have a game in hand.

PHOTO: ARSENAL

Zico ignored as Ishaque gets first call-up

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh coach Javier Cabrera has included inexperienced goalkeeper Ishaque Ali Akondo in the 28-member preliminary squad for the upcoming two international matches, overlooking experienced custodian Anisur Rahman Zico.

Bangladesh will play a FIFA friendly against Vietnam on March 26 as part of preparation for the away AFC Asian Cup qualifying match against Singapore on March 31.

Among the 28 players named, Brothers Union goalkeeper Akondo is the only fresh inclusion. The 41-year-old coach has dropped England-based midfielder Cuba Mitchell defenders Taj Uddin and Topu Barman, and forward Rakib Hossain from the squad that faced India in Dhaka last November. The latter two are unavailable due to suspension.

Akondo, who previously represented the Bangladesh U-20 team in AFC competitions, expressed satisfaction after receiving his maiden national team call-up and vowed to fight for a place in the final 23-member squad. The Sirajganj-born keeper kept three clean sheets in nine Bangladesh Football League matches, conceding 11 goals.



PRELIMINARY SQUAD

Goalkeepers: Mitul Marma, Sujan Hossain, Mehedi Hasan Srabon, Ishaque Akondo

Defenders: Tariq Raihan Kazi, Rahmat Mia, Shakil Ahad Topu, Abdullah Omar, Shakil Hossain, Zayyan Ahmed, Bishwanath Ghosh, Saad Uddin, Monjurur Rahman Manik, Isa Faysal.

Midfielders: Shah Quazem Kirmane, Sheikh Marsalin, Jamal Bhuyan, Sohel Rana, Md Sohel Rana, Mohammad Ridoy, Shamit Shome

Forwards: Arman Faysal Akash, Emon Shahriar, Faisal Ahmed Fahim, Fahamedul Islam, Mirajul Islam Rafiqul Islam, Sumon Reza.

“I will try my best to secure a place in the final 23-member squad, although it will be a challenge to compete with the other goalkeepers – Mitul Marma, Mehedi Hasan Srabon and Sujan Hossain,”

Conen’s record before Pele

Germany’s Edmund Conen completed a hat-trick by scoring in the 66th, 70th and 87th minutes against Belgium at the 1934 World Cup. He was only 19 years, 198 days old at the time. His record as the youngest player to score a World Cup hat-trick stood for 24 years. It was broken at the 1958 World Cup when Brazil legend Pele netted a hat-trick against France at the age of 17 years and 244 days.

**** Visit The Daily Star’s website to also read: ‘From traffic signals to the World Cup’**



Akondo said in a video message shared by the Bangladesh Football Federation.

Mitul and Sujon have been regular starters for their respective clubs, Abahani and Mohammedan. Mitul has conceded 11 goals and kept five clean sheets in 11 league matches, while Sujon has kept two clean sheets in nine appearances, conceding 11 goals.

Srabon has featured in only one league match, conceding once, as experienced Zico has been preferred ahead of him at Bashundhara Kings. Zico kept four clean sheets in 10 matches, conceding 12 goals.

There were strong speculations within the football fraternity that Zico would return to the preliminary squad after missing the last nine internationals over a 15-month period, however, he was once again overlooked by the Spanish coach.

Apart from the four goalkeepers, Cabrera has recalled fit-again defenders Bishwanath Ghosh, Monjurur Rahman Manik and Isa Faysal, along with young striker Mirajul Islam, experienced winger Rafiqul Islam, and forwards Sumon Reza and Fahamedul Islam, who missed the India match due to suspension.

Meanwhile, Leicester City midfielder Hamza Choudhury, who was not named in the 28, is set to join the team in Vietnam on March 22.



42 ZILLA PARISHADS Govt appoints BNP leaders as administrators

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government has appointed administrators to 42 zila parishads (district councils) across the country, all of whom are BNP leaders.

The new administrators will serve until further notice, according to a gazette issued by the Ministry of Local Government, Rural Development and Cooperatives yesterday.

PMO officials said the appointments were made to strengthen local governance and accelerate development activities at the district level via the zila parishads, many of which had been operating without elected representatives since the political changeover in August 2024.

Until now, deputy commissioners had been serving as administrators of the zila parishads.

Government and party sources said the

Local govt polls not BNP's priority yet

SAJJAD HOSSAIN

The ruling BNP has yet to begin preparations for the local government elections, as its central leadership is occupied with government duties, leaving them with little time to reorganise its grassroots structure for the next electoral contest.

"The government has more urgent matters to deal with right now," said a BNP standing committee member asking not to be named to speak candidly on the issue.

After winning the national election and forming the government, the BNP has had little time to organise itself, according to multiple standing committee members.

Many of its senior leaders now hold positions in the government and their days are filled with cabinet meetings, parliamentary duties, responding to global developments and implementing the party's election pledges.

"If we do not give time to organise the party properly, the other parties may gain an advantage," the leader said.

From the central leadership in Dhaka to district and upazila organisers, many leaders are currently involved in state responsibilities.

"That means the party itself has not yet returned to its normal activities," said a Dhaka north unit BNP leader seeking anonymity.

However, seven district level leaders said that the delay is already becoming noticeable.

Rivals have already begun informal campaigning in some areas. Local meetings are being held, activists are visiting communities and party supporters are beginning to prepare for the next elections.

"Our preparations have not started properly yet. If we delay it too long, it could affect us politically," said an

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Jamaat gears up for local polls

MAMUNUR RASHID

After contesting the February 12 national election as part of an alliance, Jamaat-e-Islami has begun preparations to take part in the local government polls independently.

The party is working to identify potential candidates for mayoral posts in city corporations and municipalities, as well as chairman posts in district, upazila, and union parishads. District and metropolitan units have already been instructed to prepare preliminary lists of prospective nominees.

Central leaders say some of the lists have reached the party headquarters, while others are expected after Eid. Once the process is completed, Jamaat plans to finalise candidates initially for 12 city corporations, including the two in Dhaka. Nominees for district, municipality, upazila, and union parishad polls will later be selected locally, with emphasis on grassroots opinion and locally acceptable figures.

Ahsanul Mahboob Zubair, Jamaat assistant secretary general and head of its central publicity department, told The Daily Star that the party was moving ahead with the idea of contesting local government polls independently and without party symbols. He said district and upazila units were informed of the decision immediately after the parliamentary polls.

"The government will decide the election schedule, but prospective candidates also need to remain active in

SEE PAGE 8 COL 1

FARMERS' TK 10,000 LOANS Govt asks banks to write them off, withdraw cases



STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government has decided to pay the loans and interest owed to banks for farmers whose debts have been waived, on the condition that all cases filed against those farmers are withdrawn.

The conditions were outlined in a directive sent by the finance ministry to Bangladesh Bank yesterday. The move is part of the BNP's election pledge to waive agricultural loans of up to Tk 10,000, including interest.

According to the directive, the government will settle liabilities arising from the write-off of loans and interest up to Tk 10,000 through budget allocations. For this purpose, Tk 1,568 crore has been earmarked in the revised budget for the current fiscal year.

Of the total amount, about 54 percent will be paid by Rajshahi Krishi Unnayan Bank and Bangladesh Krishi Bank, while the remaining amount will be distributed among other state-

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CANAL RESTORATION PM launches nationwide drive today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Prime Minister Tarique Rahman is scheduled to visit Dinajpur today to inaugurate a nationwide canal excavation and re-excavation programme aimed at improving irrigation, restoring water flow, and strengthening rural water management.

The initiative revives a programme originally introduced by BNP founder and late president Ziaur Rahman, who launched canal excavation across the country. The ruling BNP government is restarting the programme in line with its election manifesto.

The prime minister will formally inaugurate the nationwide programme through the re-excavation of a 12-kilometre canal in the Balrampur Sahapara area of Kaharol upazila in Dinajpur. The inauguration ceremony will be held virtually while excavation work begins at the site.

In the first phase, the programme will be implemented in 54 districts across the country. On the same day, ministers, state ministers, whips and members of parliament will inaugurate similar excavation programmes in other districts.

According to the schedule released by the Prime Minister's Office (PMO), Tarique will fly from Dhaka to Saidpur Airport this morning. From there, he will travel by road

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Three workers electrocuted to death

Two others also injured when a crane hit a power line

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Three workers were electrocuted to death and two others injured after a crane came into contact with an overhead power line in the Khapara area of Khilkhet in the capital yesterday.

The deceased are Rajib Hossain, 25, of Fuljhuri village in Barguna Sadar; Razzak Miya, 57, of Basuki village in Barguna Sadar; and Farid Jaman, 64, of Battachor village in Jamalpur's Bakshiganj upazila, said police.

Khilkhet Police Station Sub-Inspector Reazul Jabbar said the incident took place around 4:00pm when Dhaka Electric Supply Company (Desco) was installing underground power lines in the area.

Around 20-25 workers were on site when five were electrocuted and taken to Kurmitola General Hospital, where doctors declared three dead, he added.

Desco Chief Engineer Manjurul Haque said workers from a subcontracting company hired by Desco have been laying underground electric wires over the past month.

"Today, around 4:30pm, workers were unloading cables from a truck using a crane. When the crane touched an overhead power line, five of them got electrocuted. Later, three of them died," he added.

Police are investigating the incident, the SI said.



People throng the roadside clothing stalls to complete their Eid shopping at the Gulistan area yesterday around noon.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

War further
clouds private
credit demand

B1

HASANAH
ISLAMIC BANKING
البنكية الاسلامي
Prime Bank

PRAYER
TIMING
MARCH 16

Fajr	Zohr	Asr	Maghrib	Esha
AZAN 4:54	12:45	4:30	6:10	7:45
JAMAAT 5:04	1:15	4:45	6:20	8:15

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

SEHRI, IFTAR TIMING

RAMADAN	MAR	SEHRI	IFTAR
26	16		6:10
27	17	4:50	6:10
28	18	4:49	6:10