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

## TIPAIMUKH DAM 'A disaster of our own making'

Says JS Speaker

BSS, Dhaka

Jatiya Sangsad Speaker Haliz Uddin Ahmad yesterday described the Tipaimukh Dam on the Barak river in India's Manipur state as "a disaster of our own making", claiming that the neighbouring country moved ahead with the project following a request from Bangladesh.

"The Tipaimukh Dam, a proposed 1,500MW hydroelectric project, was taken up by India following a request from the then foreign minister Abdus Samad Azad. It was a disaster created by our own efforts," the speaker said.

He said this while Environment Minister Abdul Awal Mintoo was replying to a query raised by treasury bench lawmaker Abdul Malique of Sylhet 3 on the adverse impact of the Tipaimukh Dam on Sylhet during question-answer session in the House.

"As I served as water resources minister, I have

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# From political epicentre to a space of neglect

Once central to movements, historic Muktangan now lies occupied and inaccessible

DIPAN NANDY

The Muktangan, an iconic political epicentre at the heart of Dhaka, once echoed with slogans, rallies, and protest speeches.

Now, the ground lies long forgotten amid neglect, buried under garbage, surrounded by waste transfer points and encroached footpaths, and occupied by a car rental business for parking microbuses.

Visiting Muktangan recently, this correspondent found a waste management centre on one side, emitting a constant stench.

Rusted fences, dirty sidewalks, and illegally parked microbuses were seen occupying what was once a green, open field serving as a cradle of political movements from the 1980s till around 2010.

The ground has also become a common spot for drug users and vagrants. The once vibrant public space is now unrecognisable.

Despite its historical and political significance, the government has taken no visible steps to protect or preserve Muktangan.

The Dhaka South City Corporation (DSCC) had earlier launched a development project to build a park and playground on the site, but work has remained



suspended for over six months.

Visitors passing from Purana Paltan to Zero Point often look for the historic site, only to be met with disappointment and disbelief.

According to sources, Muktangan was designated as a political assembly ground soon after the Liberation War by the then government. From the anti-autocracy movement to

rights protests, it became one of the most important venues for public expression in the country, particularly throughout the 1980s and 1990s.

However, the site began to lose its purpose after 2010, gradually being taken over by illegal structures, car stands, and waste facilities.

Since 2021, DSCC has been using portions of the ground

as a waste transfer centre, from which garbage overflows daily, turning the ground into a muddy, unhygienic site.

Public toilets have been built on another side, while makeshift shops, a small mosque, and even a scrapyard have sprung up along the footpath. Local residents lament that the ground has now become off-limits for them.

Rahim Sheikh, a driver who parks his vehicle there, said, "We park here under our union's rules. We have to pay monthly fees to manage everything."

Another driver, Md Taslim added, "It used to be an open field, but now it's impossible to keep it empty. We agree it should be freed from occupation and maintained, but we have to earn our livelihood. If the government provides an alternative space, we'll move immediately."

Veteran politician and Nagarik Oikya President Mahmudur Rahman Manna said, "When Muktangan was created, the idea was good - but the space was too small for large rallies. Nonetheless, a dedicated place for assemblies is urgently needed. If it is renovated now and used again for public gatherings, it would be beneficial. The government should look into this."

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## ME INSTABILITY

# Govt eyeing new labour markets

## Tarique tells parliament

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government has drawn up a clear plan to explore alternative labour markets for Bangladeshi workers amid recent instability around the Persian Gulf, Prime Minister Tarique Rahman told the parliament yesterday.

"Local lobbyist and expert firms will be appointed as needed, based on recommendations from Bangladeshi missions overseas," he said while responding to a question from BNP MP

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# Country has 1.98 lakh recognised freedom fighters

## Liberation War affairs minister tells JS

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Liberation War Affairs Minister Ahmed Azam Khan yesterday said according to the integrated list preserved in the ministry, there are currently 1,98,037 recognised freedom fighters in Bangladesh.

He provided this information in response to a question from ruling party MP AM Mahub Uddin Khokon.

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## HADI MURDER

# Helal placed on three-day remand

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday placed arms seller Mazedul Haque Helal on a three-day remand in a case filed over the killing of Inqilab Moncho's spokesperson Sharif Osman Hadi.

Dhaka Additional Chief Metropolitan Magistrate Jashita Islam passed the order after the Criminal Investigation Department (CID) produced him before the court with a seven-day remand prayer, said a sub-inspector working at the court.

During the remand hearing, no lawyer defended Helal.

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## BANGLADESHIS IN SPAIN

# 15,000 to be regularised

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Spain has announced an amnesty programme for an estimated 5,00,000 undocumented migrants, including around 15,000 Bangladeshis.

The Spanish Council of Ministers approved the royal decree titled "Extraordinary Regularisation" on Tuesday. Those residing there under an irregular status can start applying from today.

"We are very happy about this generous gesture from the Spanish authorities. This can help the migrants who have been living here without proper documents," Bangladesh Ambassador to Spain Masudur Rahman told The Daily Star yesterday.

He said the embassy will provide any support required for the Bangladeshis to apply for the regularisation.

"My advice to the Bangladeshis applying would be that they must provide correct documents and information," Masudur Rahman said.

They will need some documents from Bangladesh as well, including police clearance, he said.

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## SHAPLA CHATTAR

# Former IGP Mamun involved in crackdown

Says ICT chief prosecutor

STAR REPORT

Investigators have found evidence of the involvement of former inspector general of police Chowdhury Abdullah Al-Mamun and several high-ranking officials in the Shapla Chattar crackdown, ICT Chief Prosecutor Aminul Islam revealed yesterday.

Speaking to reporters at his office, Islam termed the incident a "heinous massacre" and informed that the complete investigation report is expected within the next 10 to 15 days.

He vowed that all

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PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON

Pedestrians, including school children, navigate a risky stretch of sidewalk as the Dhaka Power Distribution Company carries out underground power cable replacement work along Sat Masjid Road in Dhanmondi yesterday. The excavation, which has been ongoing for two weeks, has left open trenches and heavy equipment in commuter paths without adequate safety barriers, disrupting one of the capital's busiest roads during peak hours.

## Change of Date

25<sup>th</sup>

The Daily Star Prime Bank

O&A  
LEVEL  
AWARDS

Saluting the Nation Builders of Tomorrow

New date:  
**Saturday, 25 July 2026**

~~Previous Date: 18 April 2026~~

Due to an unforeseen technical issue at the venue, the event has been rescheduled to 25 July 2026.

We regret any inconvenience caused.