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Deadliest day in measles outbreak

2 confirmed deaths, 15 die with symptoms

TUHIN SHUBHRA ADHIKARY

The country logged its highest single-day death toll from measles and measles-like symptoms, with 17 child deaths reported in the 24 hours till 8:00am yesterday.

Previously, the highest single-day death toll was recorded on April 5, when 12 patients died.

Of the 17 deaths, two were confirmed measles cases while 15 were suspected, according to the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS).

Of these 15 suspected cases, two children died at Bangladesh Shishu Hospital and Institute in the 24 hours till 8:00am Sunday. As it was reported yesterday, the deaths were added to the latest toll, the DGHS clarified.

With these figures, the total number of deaths from measles and measles-like symptoms since March 15 has risen to 311.

Health experts say measles, coupled with underlying illnesses and malnutrition, is causing the deaths of children.

The country saw relatively fewer deaths from confirmed and suspected cases in the week after April 26, averaging between one and seven a day. The number then rose sharply to 10 on Sunday and 17 yesterday.

The grim development comes as a nationwide measles-rubella vaccination drive is on to curb the spread of the highly contagious disease, which has led to a surge in child deaths in recent weeks.

According to health experts, measles, coupled with underlying illnesses and

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Two-year-old Yamoni rests on her mother's shoulder as she receives breathing support through a nebuliser. The child has been undergoing treatment at the DNCC Covid-19 Dedicated Hospital in the capital's Mohakhali for the past four days after being diagnosed with measles.

PHOTO: MEHEDI HASAN

Tensions flare over Trump's Hormuz plan

US, Iran claim targeting each other's warships; drone causes fire in UAE's Fujairah

AGENCIES

Tensions rose in the Strait of Hormuz yesterday as both the United States and Iran claimed attacks on vessels, with Donald Trump warning Iran that its forces would be "blown off the face of the earth" if they targeted US ships guiding vessels through the strait.

A top US admiral said the US shot down

multiple Iranian missiles and drones fired at US Navy and commercial vessels and destroyed six of Tehran's small boats.

US Apache and Seahawk helicopters hit "six Iranian small boats threatening commercial shipping," Admiral Brad Cooper, the head of US Central Command (CENTCOM), told journalists.

US forces also "effectively engaged" all

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BJP sweeps West Bengal

Modi hails 'blossoming of lotus'; Mamata loses seat to Suwendu, decries massive irregularities

Total seats
294

Majority mark
148



BJP
206



TMC
80 (1 ahead)

AGENCIES

Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi's party yesterday secured a resounding election victory in West Bengal, expanding his unrivalled consolidation of power across the country.

It is the first time that the Bharatiya Janata Party has won assembly elections in West Bengal, a large and politically significant state in eastern India.

Over the past 15 years, the state has been ruled by Trinamool Congress, a key opposition party, under the leadership of Mamata Banerjee, the state's chief minister. Mamata had been one of the most outspoken critics of Modi and his religious nationalist agenda over his 12 years in power.

But in a result that will have significant implications for India's political landscape and

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What caused TMC's rout

SUVOJIT BAGCHI, Kolkata

The BJP has finally swept West Bengal, a state that shares a long border, language and cultural ties with Bangladesh and has long stood apart from Narendra Modi's political advance.

The outcome raises several questions: why did the Trinamool Congress lose? How did the BJP secure a landslide? And who will be the next chief minister?

Analysts point to several factors. One is the Trinamool's heavy reliance on Muslim votes. In past elections, the party secured 75-80 percent of these votes and aimed for

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Villagers build a temporary earthen embankment in the Dahapara area of Singra upazila, Natore, to keep floodwaters out of their paddy fields. The photo was taken recently.

PHOTO: COURTESY OF SAIFUL ISLAM

Chalan Beel farmers rush to harvest as flood fears loom

AHMED HUMAYUN KABIR TOPU, Pabna

Farmers of Chalan Beel in Singra upazila, Natore, are making their best effort to bring their crops home before monsoon waters submerge the marshland. In order to prevent water from entering the paddy fields in the event of a flood, the local agriculture office and villagers have put up temporary dams blocking the beel's canal network.

Farmer Saiful Islam, who cultivated 20 bighas of paddy, managed to harvest only five to six bighas last week before heavy rains forced him to stop.

Meanwhile, the swelling Atrai river has begun flooding into the Dahapara area, causing serious concern among local farmers.

In response, villagers have built temporary earthen embankments to block the rush of water. Saiful noted that if the weather remains stable for the next week or so, the entire wetland can be harvested.

"Every year, the monsoon water arrives after the harvest. However, early rains have caused the Atrai

river to swell just as the harvest began, and so farmers are now spending their days worrying about their hard-earned crops," Saiful said.

As the skies cleared on Sunday morning, Saiful and many others resumed harvesting, hoping for at least 10 days of dry weather to finish the job.

Chalan Beel is the country's largest wetland in the lower Atrai basin, stretching across Sirajganj, Natore, and Pabna. In this key marshland for paddy cultivation, Singra upazila in Natore logs the highest yield among all upazilas.

The crisis is not limited to Dahapara; the entire Chalan Beel marshland in Singra is under threat as the Atrai river pushes water into the beel's canal network.

Speaking to The Daily Star, Khandakar Farid, the Singra upazila agriculture officer, said that 36,610 hectares were brought under Boro cultivation this year, with

a production target of 2.78 lakh tonnes.

While this is one of the largest paddy-producing upazilas in the country, early rainfall is threatening smooth harvest.

"So far, 14,000 hectares have been harvested. However, continuous rain over the last three days has

hampered progress. The swelling Atrai river and the rising water levels in the canals have farmers worried that water will soon breach the fields," Farid said.

The local agriculture office has moved quickly to put up three temporary earthen embankments in Jormollika, Chougram, and

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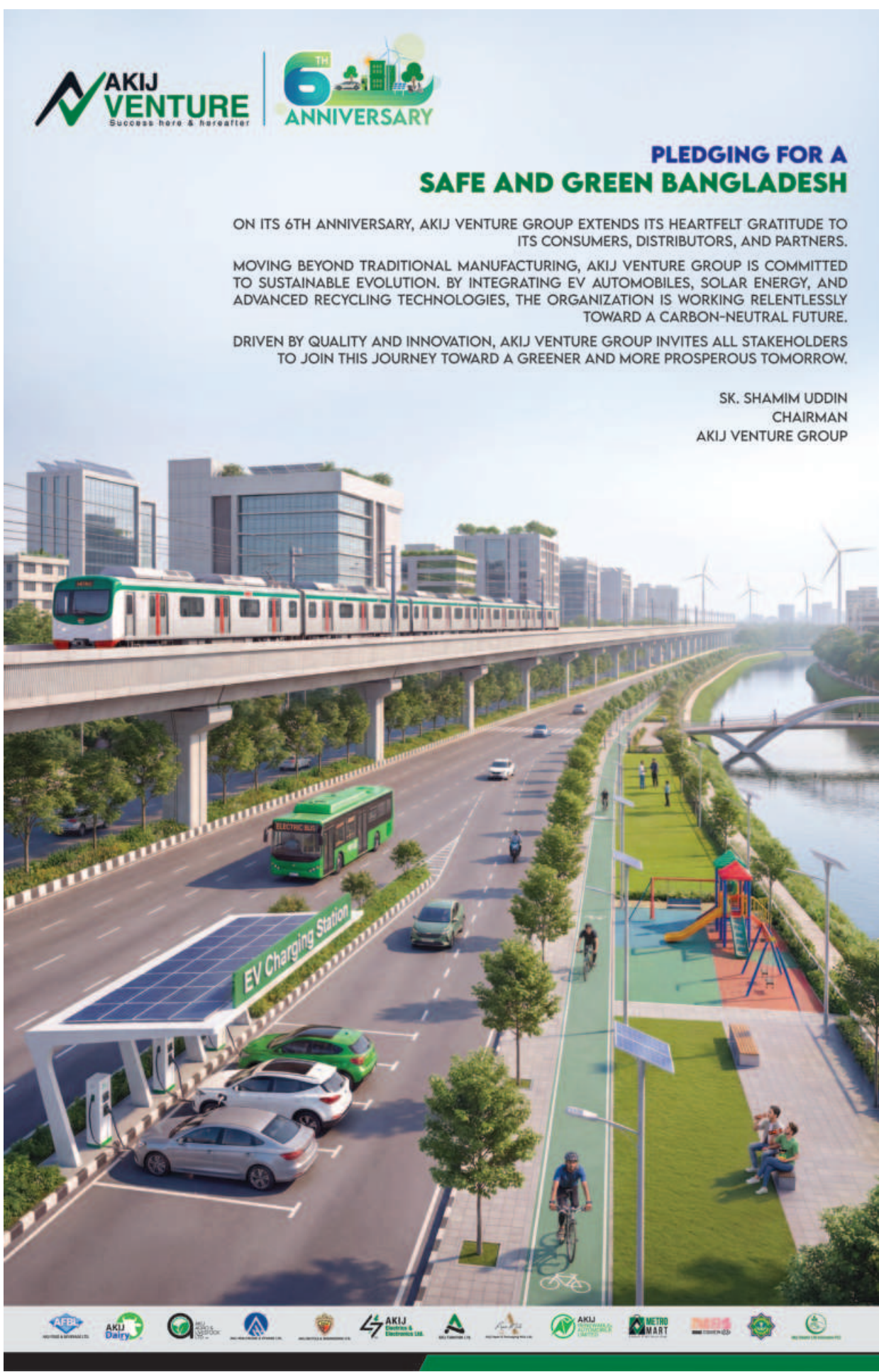




PHOTO: MEHEDI HASAN

Rainy days at Dhaka University

ASHIF AHMED RUDRO

Dhaka has a love-hate relationship with rain. The city desperately craves rain, yet remains poorly equipped to handle the downpour when it does come.

The city can be divided into several imaginary sections, each responding to rain differently. But perhaps no part of Dhaka handles rain quite like Dhaka University.

The DU campus is one of the few places in the city where one can still find green trees. Rain is welcomed here, almost always with a kind of festivity that only DU can harbour.

I remember when I used to live in one of the dormitories. My room was on the 9th floor. From the balcony, I had a clear view of the Kabi Jasimuddin Hall playground outside. No matter the time, if rain fell, boys would manage a football and get on the pitch.

It might not have been much of a pitch at that time. It was an uneven



field, with patches of grass and slippery soil here and there, but that did not stop the boys. When rain came, those studious people in their early to mid-twenties became children again.

It was like this in every playground on the campus. There used to be a little waterlogging problem in the playground of Haji Muhammad Mohsin Hall, but that never stopped anyone from playing in the water.

The walkway through Mall Chattar that leads to the hall para is shaded by trees, offering a breath of fresh air. But it looks exceptionally dreamy after rain.

Sometimes, one finds krishnachura shielding the harsh asphalt,

turning the dark tarmac into a much more vibrant road to take. There were days when the road ahead looked just wet enough to reflect the sky, covered with flowers that had fallen during the rain.

The mirror-like road, adorned with nature's ornaments, presents a view one would usually see only on canvas. But here, on the campus I called home, it was not just a reality, it was a routine.

The path felt as if it had come straight out of a storybook. If you were one of the more enthusiastic people, as I was back in the day, you could walk this road during the rain and you would not be alone.

There were always those few who

found joy in rain. They stepped out in the downpour to feel every drop of water that had touched the clouds.

It makes you feel alive. And you never feel out of place doing it on this campus because there is always someone dancing in the rain.

The grass of Curzon Hall looks much lusher after rain, whether it is just a little drizzle or an absolute deluge. The effect remains the same.

The ponds behind the historic edifice turn a strangely captivating colour, one that I cannot put into words. The red walls look less like stone and more like an unpolished jewel. The dark soil beneath your feet feels welcoming.

Sure, to many, this may sound like an alumnus romanticising their campus. And that is true.

But it does not take away from the beauty of this campus.

It makes me want to sing: "Rain, rain, go away, come around another way, Dhaka University wants to play, rain, rain, come right away."

Deadliest day in measles outbreak

FROM PAGE 1
malnutrition, is causing the deaths of children. They noted that the number of deaths is expected to decline as cases begin to fall, likely in late May or early June.

City hospitals are still struggling with the rise in measles patients, mostly children, many of whom are being referred from district and upazila health facilities. Amid this situation, many guardians have complained of a shortage of ICU facilities.

Health Minister Sardar Md Sakawat Husain said 86 percent of targeted children have already been vaccinated, and he hoped for a let-up in the surge in four to five days.

The two confirmed measles deaths yesterday were reported from Dhaka and Chattogram divisions, the DGHS said, raising the total number of confirmed deaths to 52.

The 15 suspected measles deaths that were recorded during the period brought the total number of suspected deaths to 259.

Of the latest deaths, 11 were reported from the Dhaka division and four from the

Chattogram division.

During the same period, 154 new confirmed cases were reported, raising the tally of confirmed cases to 5,467.

Additionally, the DGHS recorded 1,302 new suspected cases, bringing the total number of suspected cases to 41,793.

WHAT EXPERTS SAY

Mirza Md Ziaul Islam, head of the paediatrics department at Bangladesh Shishu Hospital and Institute, said, "Most of the children who come here have multiple health problems. Their immunity is already low, and when they are infected with measles, their condition deteriorates fast."

Many of the measles patients have heart or kidney complications, while a large number of children are suffering from severe malnutrition or pneumonia, he told The Daily Star yesterday.

Despite a reported drop in measles cases in some upazilas, the Shishu hospital continues to receive a growing number of patients in critical condition, and as of yesterday, there were 89

measles patients admitted to the hospital, he added.

Replying to a question, he said the infection rate will gradually decline as the nationwide vaccination campaign continues, and as infections decrease, the number of deaths will also fall.

Fazle Rabbi Chowdhury, associate professor of internal medicine at Bangladesh Medical University, said a review of the measles deaths shows that many of the victims were unvaccinated, severely malnourished, and had comorbidities.

The situation might not have arisen if the scheduled special campaign in 2024 had been carried out on time to bring unvaccinated children under coverage and allow their immunity to develop.

He said children require at least four weeks to develop immunity after vaccination, and therefore the infection rate is expected to decline in late May or early June.

Several other experts also predicted that the infection rate would come down in late May.

Health Minister Sardar Md Sakawat Husain said no new measles cases have been reported from 30 high-burden upazilas where the vaccination drive began on April 5.

He told journalists at a city hotel programme that infection rates in the four city corporations have also dropped following the April 12 rollout.

On April 20, the nationwide measles vaccination campaign got underway.

The minister said it takes about three weeks for antibodies to develop. "We have not yet reached that period, and it will take another four to five days before the current surge begins to decline," he added.

Asked about the ICU shortage hampering the treatment of critical measles patients, the health minister acknowledged the matter. "Within these constraints, ICU facilities have been expanded not only in Dhaka but also outside – such as in Manikganj – while the ICU capacity in Rajshahi has been increased."

Chalan Beel farmers rush to harvest

FROM PAGE 1
Sholmari to prevent flooding. Similar protective measures have been taken by villagers at two sluice gate areas where water had already begun to seep into the croplands.

Despite the urgency, many farmers are harvesting traditionally rather than using combined harvesters to save on costs.

"Paddy is currently selling

for Tk 1,100 per maund, which is lower than last year. If we use combined harvesters, the increased costs would result in a huge loss. We are harvesting by hand to remain profitable," explained Ashrafur Islam, a farmer from Shatpukuria village.

With approximately 60 percent of the paddy still in the fields, the next two weeks are critical. Agriculture officials and farmers agree

that if the weather stays clear and the temporary dams hold, the entire crop can be safely brought home.

Officials from the local agriculture office continue to monitor the situation closely as the harvest continues in full swing.

Due to the onrush of water from upstream, the Atrai river has been swelling rapidly over the past few days, with water levels rising at least 10 feet

in the last three, said Emdad Hossain, sub-divisional engineer of the Natore Water Development Board.

As of yesterday, the river was flowing 2.69 metres below the danger level (a little over 12 metres).

"We are closely monitoring the situation in Singra, which is most vulnerable to flood. So far, the situation is under control," he said.

BJP sweeps West Bengal

FROM PAGE 1
deal another demoralising blow to the already weakened opposition, the BJP looked set to win more than 205 out of 294 seats in Bengal's state assembly, a landmark majority.

Votes were still being counted under tight security in the state of more than 100 million people, one of five states and territories that held elections in April and May.

The results should put Modi on a stronger footing while he battles a series of economic and foreign policy challenges, including high unemployment rates and a pending US trade deal, ahead of a general election in 2029.

According to the Election Commission of India, the BJP has won 206 seats. The Trinamool Congress has secured 80 seats and is leading in one constituency. Congress has won two seats, while four others went to smaller parties.

The majority mark in the 294-member House is 148. However, with counting underway in 293 seats after polling in one constituency was countermanded, the effective majority has dropped to 147.

"The 2026 West Bengal Assembly Elections will be remembered forever," Modi said on social media. "People's power has prevailed, and BJP's politics of good governance has triumphed."

"BJP's record win in West Bengal would not be possible without the efforts and struggles of countless Karyakartas (workers) over generations."

He added, "Today, with this victory in Bengal,

the lotus has blossomed everywhere – from Gangotri to Gangasagar."

Senior party leaders and thousands of supporters celebrated on the streets of the state capital Kolkata, joyously swaying to victory tunes.

However, Mamata alleged massive irregularities in vote counting.

"More than 100 seats BJP looted. The Election

waged an aggressive campaign to dislodge Mamata from power in West Bengal.

Though there was no major violence, scuffles broke out outside several counting centres in the state, and police used batons to control the crowd. Past elections have resulted in violence.

Mamata was scheduled to hold a press conference

the BJP to skew the election in their favour, which was denied by the government.

For years, West Bengal was the great exception to Narendra Modi's political advance.

BJP had swept through India's Hindi-speaking heartland, expanded into the west and north-east, and overwhelmed once-formidable regional rivals. Yet Bengal – argumentative and steeped in a self-image of cultural exceptionalism – remained stubbornly resistant.

That made this state election unusually consequential. Yesterday's BJP victory there would rank among the most significant breakthroughs of Modi's 12-year reign. It is not merely the defeat of a three-term incumbent, but the completion of the party's long march into eastern India.

Analysts see the outcome not as a sudden upheaval but as the culmination of a decade-long political project. Unlike the BJP's rapid rise in Tripura or its earlier breakthrough in Assam, Bengal was never a lightning conquest.

"The BJP has been a major force in Bengal for three successive elections, consistently polling around 39% of the popular vote," says Rahul Verma, who is a fellow at the Centre for Policy Research.

Once it established itself near the 39-40 percent mark, he argues, "the party really needed only another 5-6% to cross the line". Voting trends show the BJP mopping up more than 44 percent of the vote this time.

Tensions flare over

FROM PAGE 1

"missiles and drones that were fired at both us and the commercial ships," Cooper said.

Some cruise missiles were launched at US Navy ships, but most of them, as well as multiple drones, targeted commercial vessels, he said.

In a post on his Truth Social Platform, Trump put the number of Iranian boats struck at seven and said "there has been, at this moment, no damage going through the Strait" aside from a South Korean ship that was hit, about which he provided no further details.

In an interview with Fox News, Trump also said he sees two paths forward in his war: either reaching a good-faith deal or resuming military operations.

He told Fox News that the ongoing US naval blockade was "one of the greatest military manoeuvres ever done" and that the Iranians were being "far more malleable" in recent talks than before.

Trump caused worldwide outrage the last time he made similar threats, writing on social media last month that "a whole civilisation will die" if Iran failed to comply with his demands. He also previously threatened to bomb Iran "back to the Stone Ages" and to blow up all of the country's bridges and power plants.

Iranian state television, meanwhile, quoted a senior military official from the country as saying: "The US claim that it sank a number of Iranian war boats is false."

After weeks of relative calm in the region, the United Arab Emirates yesterday said a drone strike caused a fire at an energy installation in the emirate of Fujairah.

Fujairah is home to a major port, pipeline and other petroleum-based installations bypassing the throttled Strait of Hormuz.

US and Israeli forces launched the war against Iran on February 28, after which the Islamic republic

closed the Strait of Hormuz – a vital route for oil and gas exports – while American forces later launched a blockade of Iranian ports.

Iranian state television said earlier that the country's navy had fired cruise missiles, rockets and combat drones near US destroyers moving through the strait in what it described as a "warning shot."

CENTCOM said that two US guided-missile destroyers had passed through the strait into the Gulf as part of "Project Freedom," while two US-flagged merchant vessels transited the opposite way and "are safely headed on their journey."

Negotiations between Washington and Tehran have been deadlocked since a ceasefire in the US-Israeli war against Iran took effect on April 8, with Tehran's stranglehold on the strait a main point of contention.

"For the good of Iran, the Middle East, and the United States, we have told these (non-combatant) Countries that we will guide their Ships safely out of these restricted Waterways," Trump posted on Truth Social, saying operations would begin on Monday.

Once out, "they will not be returning until the area becomes safe for navigation," Trump added.

As of April 29, more than 900 commercial vessels were located in the Gulf, according to maritime intelligence firm AXSMarine.

In response to Trump, the Iranian military's central command said any safe passage through Hormuz must be coordinated with its forces "under all circumstances".

In the early hours of yesterday, the British maritime agency UKMTO also reported an attack on a tanker off the UAE with "unknown projectiles".

Later in the day, the UAE said Iran had fired drones at a tanker affiliated with its state-owned oil giant ADNOC.

What caused TMC's rout

FROM PAGE 1
85-90 percent this time. However, two new parties – the Indian Secular Front and the Am Janata Unnayan Party of Murshidabad – drew away a portion of this support, weakening the Trinamool's base. Their full impact will be clearer once final vote shares are available.

Then there is the Hindu vote. Securing around 55 percent typically puts a party within reach of victory. Based on seats won and leads, analysts believe the BJP may have secured 60-65 percent, or more.

At the same time, the BJP's victory opens up new possibilities while raising concerns. One key question is how a party rooted in northern India will adapt to West Bengal's intellectual and cultural landscape.

Another issue is demographic: around 30 percent of the state's population is Muslim, and how a Hindu nationalist

party like the BJP engages with this community remains uncertain.

Organisational depth remains a challenge. For decades, West Bengal has been a bastion of centrist and left-of-centre politics, and it remains to be seen how the BJP will consolidate its position.

There is also a regional dimension involving Bangladesh. The two share a 2,000-kilometre border, and the election outcome could affect bilateral ties, particularly on issues such as border management and alleged infiltration.

It would be wrong to view the BJP's rise as a short-term phenomenon. The party has worked on a long-term strategy over the past three to four years, much of it behind the scenes, and that effort is now yielding results.

Strong anti-incumbency also played a role. The Trinamool has been in power for 15 years and has

faced serious corruption allegations. Internal divisions have further weakened the party, which the BJP has exploited.

Another factor is the BJP's promise to double allowances under Mamata Banerjee's government, a pledge that resonated strongly in rural areas. A four-member household receiving Rs 6,000 would get Rs 12,000 under the BJP – a significant incentive in remote regions.

In addition, around 2.7 million "outsiders" were removed from voter rolls through the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) process, a move believed to have benefited the BJP.

The party also adjusted its candidate strategy, largely fielding local faces instead of outsiders. In previous elections, it nominated defectors from the Trinamool, which did not resonate with voters. This time, it appears to have learned from that approach. The TMC's reliance

on the Indian Political Action Committee (I-PAC), a consultancy handling surveys and strategy, also backfired. The firm was once led by Prashant Kishor, whose guidance had helped the party make significant gains. With his exit, however, the party's overdependence on I-PAC appears to have cost it dearly.

The biggest question now is who will be the next chief minister.

After defeating Mamata in her stronghold, Bhabanipur, Suvendu Adhikari is seen as the frontrunner.

Other names in contention include state BJP president Shamik Bhattacharya, former state president Dilip Ghosh, Sukanta Majumdar, and former journalist and Rajya Sabha member Swapan Dasgupta. There is also speculation that the BJP may opt for a less prominent figure, as it has done in the past.

(Suvjit Bagchi works for Prothom Alo)



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

Recent police changes routine, not political

Says Salahuddin; cops reverting to previous uniform with khaki trousers

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The recent retirements and transfers in the police administration are part of the ministry's routine activities and are not politically motivated, said Home Minister Salahuddin Ahmed yesterday.

"All appointments, transfers, promotions, disciplinary measures and retirements are being carried out through legal processes," the minister told reporters after a meeting at the Secretariat.

Regarding the police uniform, he said, "We have noticed that no one is satisfied with the existing uniform -- both within the police force and across the

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Commuters endure severe traffic congestion as underground cable installation work by the Dhaka Power Distribution Company Limited narrows the main road in the capital's Shantinagar area. The photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

INTERNATIONAL CRIMES TRIBUNAL

'My child is two months old, don't make him orphan'

Witness recounts ordeal in 'torture cell' at ICT-1

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A man detained in 2022 told a tribunal yesterday that he was taken to a windowless, black-walled cell measuring about four feet by four feet, where nails were allegedly fixed into the floor, and an electric chair stood in a corner.

"I slightly removed my blindfold and saw the scene. My heart sank. I realised something terrible was coming," said Md Shafiqul Islam while testifying before International Crimes Tribunal-1 as the fourth prosecution witness in a crimes against humanity case.

Shafiqul, 38, a madrasa principal and imam of a mosque in Purbachal, said interrogators in the room demanded that he confess to links with militant groups.

"When I denied it, they beat me with sticks. They threatened to cut me into pieces and dump my body... I was convinced that my end was near," he said.

"Out of fear, I held an officer's feet and pleaded, 'My child is only two months old. Don't make him an orphan. Beat me as much as you want, but don't kill

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CASE AGAINST INU

Defence questions credibility of key witnesses

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Defence counsel for Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal (JSD) president and former minister Hasanul Haq Inu yesterday told the ICT-2 that key prosecution witnesses gave contradictory and unreliable statements that do not match documentary and digital evidence.

Senior advocate Monsurul Haque Chowdhury said three witnesses told the investigation officer on June 17, 18 and 19, 2025, that they had heard an alleged audio conversation between Inu and former prime minister Sheikh Hasina on social media.

However, the defence argued the audio was first circulated on August 17, 2025, through a verified Facebook post of a foreign journalist of Bangladeshi origin.

"So, they lied to the tribunal. The three witnesses were tutored by the investigating officer, and their testimonies are not trustworthy," the defence said.

He said only four of the 10 prosecution witnesses were relevant, while the rest were formal or official witnesses. Another relevant witness made no incriminating statement, he added.

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2018 AKRAMUL KILLING

Justice finally in sight?

Fresh probe challenges 'gunfight' narrative, implicates 10; charges likely soon at ICT

SHARIFUL ISLAM and
SIRAJUL ISLAM RUBEL

In an unverified audio clip, the sound of a gun being cocked is heard, followed by a gunshot and the groans of a man. On the other end of the line, Teknaf municipality councillor Akramul Haque's wife and two daughters scream, pleading for his life.

For eight years, justice for Akramul has remained trapped in that recording.

Now, as investigators move to submit a long-delayed report to the tribunal in a case once buried under an official "gunfight" narrative, Akramul's family -- who could not even file a complaint with police or the court -- are hoping for justice.

"Since my husband's killing, we tried to file a case but could never do so due to intimidation from Rapid Action Battalion," Akramul's widow Ayesha Begum told The Daily Star yesterday.

After August 5, 2024, authorities contacted her and asked her to file a

complaint with the International Crimes Tribunal over her husband's killing, said Ayesha, who had disclosed the audio clips -- which she claimed to have recorded on her phone -- at a press conference in Cox's Bazar five days after the incident.

Ayesha has long alleged that the killing was premeditated, claiming the Rab planted evidence -- including arms

Since my husband's killing, we tried to file a case but could never do so due to intimidation from Rab.



AYESHA BEGUM, widow of Akramul

and yaba -- to justify it.

The force had denied this at the time, saying Akramul opened fire first and that drugs and arms were recovered, citing his alleged involvement in narcotics.

Rab said Akramul was killed in a gunfight with alleged drug dealers on Teknaf Marine Drive, a claim his family

SEE PAGE 9 COL 2

Simplify project approval to boost investment: PM

Assures support for investors in closed state-owned mills, factories

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Prime Minister Tarique Rahman yesterday directed officials to simplify the project approval process to attract both local and foreign investment.

He also assured necessary support for investors interested in government-owned mills and factories that have remained closed for years.

The directives came at a meeting held at the Prime Minister's Office at the Secretariat, according to the PM's Press Wing.

The meeting reviewed the current condition of closed mills and factories under the Ministry of Textiles and Jute and discussed steps to reopen them.

Tarique said the government is committed to creating an investment-friendly environment. "To achieve this goal, the existing complexities in the investment process must be removed," he said.

A senior official present at the meeting said the prime minister also stressed easing access to loans to boost private investment in closed government mills and factories, asking the ministers concerned to take swift and effective steps.



DRIVE AGAINST DENGUE

DSCC declares first Saturday of month as 'cleaning day'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Dhaka South City Corporation Administrator Md Abdus Salam yesterday declared the first Saturday of every month as "cleaning day" to prevent Aedes mosquito-borne dengue and chikungunya and keep the city clean.

The first official cleaning day will be observed on May 9 across DSCC areas.

According to the decisions taken at a Nagar Bhaban meeting, all government offices, residential quarters, educational institutions, areas under Rajuk and Rehab, and privately owned premises will carry out their own cleaning drives and destroy mosquito breeding sites.

Salam said up to 70-80 percent of the problem could be solved if all agencies performed their duties properly.

At least four dengue patients died, while 2,535 were hospitalised this year as of yesterday.

Salam instructed DSCC officials to map high-risk areas across 10 zones and 75 wards.

Md Khalilur Rahman, entomologist of the National Malaria Elimination and Aedes borne Disease Control Programme at DGHS, said current insecticides remain effective but recommended introducing more advanced larvicides such as BTI for large breeding sites.

CTG BAR POLLS NOMINATION

Pro-AL lawyers allege obstruction

STAR REPORT

Pro-Awami League lawyers yesterday alleged that they were obstructed and assaulted by BNP-backed lawyers while trying to collect nomination papers for the upcoming Chattogram District Bar Association election.

The incident took place at the Bar Library entrance in the Bar Association building around 3:00pm when a group of lawyers, led by Abdur Rashid, a presidential candidate from the pro-AL panel, went to collect nomination forms under the banner of "Sadharan Ainjibi Parishad". They were obstructed by pro-BNP lawyers, the eyewitnesses added.

As tension escalated, members of the Bar election commission shut the library doors. Pro-AL lawyers then protested on the spot.

Fakhruddin Javed, a contender for the general secretary post from the pro-AL panel, said, "We were not allowed to enter the Bar Library while attempting to collect nomination papers." "They did not allow us to contest in the last election either," he added.

Kamrul Islam Chowdhury, member secretary of the Jatiyatabadi Ainjibi Forum's Chattogram unit, said the activities of the AL are banned through order.

"In this situation, there is neither the environment nor the opportunity for AL-affiliated lawyers to participate in the election," he said.

Chief Election Commissioner Advocate Roushan Ara Begum said, "We have provided forms to whoever came to us. No one has lodged any complaint with me."

SEE PAGE 9 COL 4



The Daily Star and bti are set to launch the third edition of the "bti-The Daily Star Stellar Women Awards". An MoU was signed in this regard at The Daily Star Centre yesterday, attended by Md Tajdin Hassan, chief business officer of The Daily Star; Aysha Siddiqua, executive director (brand and communications) at bti; Mashrur Hasan Mim, executive director (marketing) at bti; and Ahaduzzaman Chowdhury, head of digital business at The Daily Star, among others.

PHOTO: STAR

'bti-Star Stellar Women Awards' returns with third edition

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Daily Star and building technology and ideas (bti) ltd are set to launch the third edition of the "bti-The Daily Star Stellar Women Awards", continuing their joint initiative to recognise emerging women for their contributions to society and nation-building.

The announcement came following an MoU signing ceremony at The Daily Star Centre, attended by Md Tajdin Hassan, chief business officer of The Daily Star; Aysha Siddiqua, executive director (brand and communications) at bti; Mashrur Hasan Mim, executive director (marketing) at bti; and Ahaduzzaman Chowdhury, head of digital business at The Daily Star, among others.

Launched in 2023, the Stellar Women initiative aims to honour women making impactful contributions across diverse sectors, particularly those who remain

SEE PAGE 9 COL 3



Eight killed in road crashes in 4 districts

STAR REPORT

Eight people were killed and at least 15 injured in road accidents in Mymensingh, Dinajpur, Tangail and Patuakhali yesterday.

In Mymensingh's Muktagachha upazila, four passengers of a CNG-run auto-rickshaw were killed in a head-on collision with a sand-laden truck on the Mymensingh-Tangail road yesterday morning.

The deceased are Chowdhury Hosne Ara Ranu, 65, a lawyer; Farzana Akter Sheuly, 38; her daughter Khushnur Jannat Rinti, 11; and Tushar Das, 18, said Muktagachha Police Station OC Kamrul Islam.



In Dinajpur's Birganj upazila, a pedestrian was killed after being hit by a car while she was crossing a road around noon. Tahura Begum of Nijpara village died on the spot.

Locals detained the driver, Arafat Jannatul Ferdous, 24, and handed him over to police, said OC Saiful Islam of Birganj Police Station.

In Tangail, two people were killed and two others injured in a collision between a truck and a pickup on the Dhaka-Tangail-Jamuna Bridge highway.

The deceased were pickup driver Mohammad Shakil, 22, and his helper Papan Kumar Paul, 26.

In Patuakhali's Bauphal upazila, a Dhaka-bound bus plunged into a roadside ditch early yesterday, killing one person and injuring at least 10 others.

Bauphal Police Station OC Sirajul Islam said efforts were underway to identify the victim, who is believed to be a bus staffer.

Harvest hopes fading

Moulvibazar records 530mm rainfall in April as flash floods hit villages, Boro fields

MINTU DESHWARA

Heavy rainfall and upstream hill runoff have triggered flash floods in parts of Moulvibazar, breaching embankments, inundating villages, and damaging crops and rural infrastructure.

In Kamalganj upazila, at least two villages in Adampur union were flooded after an embankment on the Lawachhara canal collapsed under pressure from continuous rain and hill runoff.

Adampur Union Parishad member Roshan Ali said around 40-50 households in Bhanubil and Chhangaon villages were affected and several village roads were damaged.

Kamalganj UNO Md Asaduzzaman said, "The administration is monitoring the situation and will take necessary steps to support the affected people."

Residents said the flooding happened suddenly.

Neel Moni Singh, a local resident, said parts of Bhanubil and Chhangaon went underwater within hours, while brick-paved roads were cut off by the rising water.

Another resident, Mostafiz, said floodwater entered homes suddenly, damaging furniture and stored goods.

In the haor areas under Juri and Kulaura upazilas, farmers are struggling to harvest and protect Boro paddy as water levels continue to rise.

Md Khaled Bin Olid, BWDB



executive engineer in Moulvibazar, said the district received about 530mm of rainfall in April against an average of 300mm.

Nearly 300mm of rain fell in the last three days of April alone, he said, terming the situation "concerning".

Sreemangal weather office observer Anisur Rahman said 53mm of rainfall was recorded in 24 hours from 6:00am on May 2, following 34mm in the previous 24 hours.

Farmers said they are facing severe losses.

In Hakaluki Haor, farmer Sukomol Roy said he could not harvest much of his paddy in time.

"More than two bighas are still submerged. The rain is not stopping, and we are running out of options," he said.

Across the haor region, many farmers reported similar conditions.

In some areas, farmers were seen cutting paddy from submerged fields and transporting it by boat. Others tied bundles and left them floating in water before collecting them later.

Kulaura Agriculture Officer Muhammad Jasim Uddin said 8,720 hectares were cultivated, of which about 380 hectares are already inundated.

Ensure safer newsrooms for women journalists

Say speakers

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at an event yesterday called for a transparent and accountable media environment, practical gender policies in newsrooms, and stronger measures to ensure the safety of women journalists.

They made the call at the inauguration of the "Strengthening Actions for Media Accountability through a Transformative Approach for Women Journalists (SAMATA)" project, organised by VOICE at the YWCA Auditorium in Dhaka.

The project, supported by the International Programme for the Development of Communication under Unesco Dhaka, was formally inaugurated by Dr Susan Vize, Unesco representative to Bangladesh.

"Ensuring the safety of women journalists is not only a matter of protection, but a prerequisite for

SEE PAGE 9 COL 4

Trade deal with US challenged at HC

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A Supreme Court lawyer yesterday filed a writ petition with the High Court challenging the legality of the Reciprocal Trade Agreement signed between Bangladesh and the United States of America on February 9.

Advocate Mohammad Maidul Islam Polok submitted the petition through Advocate Subir Nandi Das, saying that the "impugned" agreement is manifestly unreasonable, structurally unequal, and detrimental not only to the national interest of Bangladesh but also to the public at large.

In this context, the petition sought judicial intervention to protect broader public interest.

ওয়েস্ট জোন পাওয়ার ডিস্ট্রিবিউশন কোম্পানি লিমিটেড (ওজোপাডিকো)
WEST ZONE POWER DISTRIBUTION COMPANY LIMITED
(An enterprise of Bangladesh Power Development Board)

Memo No: 27.22.4785.007.74.009.26.762 Date: 03/05/2026

e-Tender Notice (NCT)

E-Tender for the office of the Superintending Engineer (P&S) invites in the National e-GP system Portal (www.eprocure.gov.bd) for the procurement of following Physical Services:

Sl	Tender ID	Name of Tender
1	1268511	Distribution support service (DSS) through Out Sourcing for 2(two) years under Resident Engineer (RE), Borhanuddin Electric Supply (ESU).
2	1268512	Distribution support service (DSS) through Out Sourcing for 2(two) years under Resident Engineer (RE), Charfesson Electric Supply (ESU).

This is an Online Tender, Where only e-tender will be accepted in the National e-GP System Portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted. To submit e-Tender, registration required in the National e-GP System Portal (www.eprocure.gov.bd).

(Engr. Md. Shaiful Islam)
Superintending Engineer (P&S), WZPDCL, Khulna.

GD-1006

ইস্টার্ন রিফাইনারী পিএলসি
Eastern Refinery PLC
(A Subsidiary of Bangladesh Petroleum Corporation)

e-TENDER Notice No: ER/TN/e-GP/C-16/2025-2026

Open Tendering Method (OTM)

e-Tender has been invited in the National e-GP portal (www.eprocure.gov.bd) for the procurement of work as stated below:

Sl. No.	Tender ID No.	Tender Package No. & Description	Tender Publication Date and Time	Tender Last Selling/Downloading Date and Time	Tender Closing & Opening Date and Time
01	1265453	28.25.0000.147.31.0004.26// ER/C-24/2025-2026 INSTALLATION OF A RAW WATER PUMP (DEEP TUBEWELL) INSIDE EASTERN REFINERY.	03 May, 2026 15:00 Hrs	17 May, 2026 15:00 Hrs	18 May, 2026, 15:00 Hrs

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 (www.eprocure.gov.bd) is required.

GD-1005

Defence

FROM PAGE 3

Inu is the sole accused in a crimes against humanity case over the killings of six people in Kushtia during the July uprising.

Referring to one of the three witnesses, the defence said the claim that Inu directed Hasina to use lethal force was baseless. It sought to play two audio recordings, arguing there was no evidence that Inu incited violence and claiming he had supported the student movement.

The defence also said another witness incorrectly claimed Inu was elected MP in the 2024 elections, which was later acknowledged as inaccurate by the investigating officer during cross examination. A third witness referred to an interview on "Mirror Now" in Bangla, while the submitted version was in English.

The hearing continued for the seventh day and was adjourned until today.

TO-LET / SALE
Residential Use, 2 Bed, 2 Bath, Spacious Drawing/ Cum Dining, Balcony-2, Constanth Lift 5th Floor House-25/C, Road-6, Banani To-Let. Phone: **Eng: 01814-867573**
Bakul: 01747-362792
Mr. Khan: 01779-997766

Office Space Rent
8394 Sqft
Kazi Nazrul Islam Ave
near InterContinental Dhaka
01762123500, 01712372350

গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার
কর কমিশনারের কার্যালয়
কর অঞ্চল-ফরিদপুর
৮/১, ১নং হাবেলি গোপালপুর, টেপাখোলা, ফরিদপুর
www.taxeszonefaridpur.gov.bd

নথি নং: কঃঅঃফরিদপুর/নিয়োগ/২০২৫-২০২৬/২৫৯ তারিখঃ ১৭ বৈশাখ, ১৪৩৩ বঙ্গাব্দ
৩০ এপ্রিল, ২০২৬ খ্রিস্টাব্দ

নিয়োগ বিজ্ঞপ্তি

কর অঞ্চল-ফরিদপুর এর অধিক্ষেত্রাধীন ৫ জেলার স্থায়ী বাসিন্দাগণের মধ্য হতে নিম্নবর্ণিত বিভিন্ন পদে মোট ১২২ জন জনবল নিয়োগ করার জন্য অনলাইনে আবেদনপত্র আহবান করা যাচ্ছে। নিয়োগ সংক্রান্ত পূর্ণাঙ্গ বিজ্ঞপ্তি দেখার জন্য কর অঞ্চল-ফরিদপুর এর ওয়েবসাইট **www.taxeszonefaridpur.gov.bd** ভিজিট করুন অথবা নিম্নোক্ত কিউআর কোডটি স্ক্যান করুন।



<https://taxeszonefaridpur.gov.bd/all-notice>

ক্র. নং	পদের নাম	পদ সংখ্যা
০১	কম্পিউটার অপারেটর	০১ টি
০২	প্রধান সহকারী	২২ টি
০৩	উচ্চমান সহকারী	২২ টি
০৪	সীটমুদ্রাকরিক-কাম-কম্পিউটার অপারেটর	২৩ টি
০৫	অফিস সহকারী-কাম-কম্পিউটার মুদ্রাকরিক	২৭ টি
০৬	অফিস সহায়ক	২৭ টি

১৬.০৫.২৬
মোঃ নেওয়াজুল ইসলাম শোভন
উপ কর কমিশনার
সদর দপ্তর (প্রশাসন)
ও
সদস্য সচিব
বিভাগীয় নিয়োগ কমিটি
কর অঞ্চল-ফরিদপুর
taxeszonefaridpur@gmail.com

GD-995

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Ministry of Water Resources
Water Resources Planning Organization
72, Green Road, Dhaka-1215
www.warpo.gov.bd

WARPO
পানি সম্পদ পরিকল্পনা সংস্থা

Memo No. 42.02.0000.000.004.14.0006.25-52 Date: 04/05/2026

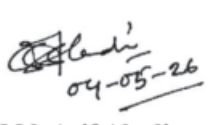
Request for Expression of Interest (REOI) for Selection of Consulting Firm to Conduct Hydrogeological Investigation and Mathematical Modeling (Re-Tender)

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

Tender/ Proposal ID	Tender/ proposal description	EoI publication date & time	EoI closing date & time	Procurement method
1269738	Selection of Consultant Firm for Hydrogeological Investigation and Mathematical Modeling in South-West Hydrological Region of Bangladesh.	Date: 04/05/2026 Time: 15.00	Date: 20/05/2026 Time: 16.00	Quality Cost Based Selection (QCBS)

This is an online invitation, where only e-EoI will be accepted through the National e-GP System Portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted. To submit an e-EoI, please register in the National e-GP System Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>).

Further information, Terms of Reference (ToR) and guidelines are available on the National e-GP System Portal and from the e-GP helpdesk (help@eprocure.gov.bd). The related REOI notice and documents are also available in WARPO website (<http://www.warpo.gov.bd>).


০৫-০৫-২৬
Md. Arif Abedin
Project Director
SWHR Project
Tel: 02-44819021

GD-1002

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Planning Division
Improvement of Public Investment Management System (IPIMS) Project
Sher-E-Bangla Nagar, Dhaka-1207
Website: plandiv.gov.bd

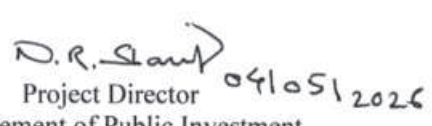
E-Tender Notice

Ref. No: 20.00.0000.404.014.01.25(part 1).03 Date: 04/05/2026

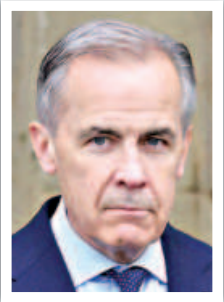
This tender has been invited in e-GP system portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) for Hiring of Two Microbuses under Improvement of Public Investment Management System (IPIMS) Project of the following description;

Tender ID	Description	Tender Publication Date & Time	Tender Document Last Selling Date & Time	Tender Closing/ Opening Date & Time
1270212	Hiring of Two Microbuses for the Project Office	05-05-2026 09:00 hours (BST)	19-05-2026 17:00 Hours (BST)	20-05-2026 15:00 Hours (BST)

This is an online tender where only e-Tender will be accepted in National e-GP Portal system (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>). No offline/hard copies will be accepted. To submit e-tender please register on e-GP portal. Information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP System Portal and from e-GP helpdesk (@eprocure.gov.bd).


০৫/০৫/২০২৬
Project Director
Improvement of Public Investment Management System (IPIMS) project
e-mail: pd.ipims.ecnec@plandiv.gov.bd

GD-1004



“We don’t think that we’re destined to submit to a more transactional insular and brutal world and gatherings such as these point to a better way forward.”

Mark Carney
Canadian PM, urging closer EU-Canada ties as strongman politics roils the international order



Palestinians watch as Israeli security forces stand guard while excavators demolish a Palestinian house that was built without a permit, in the village of al-Dirat near Yatta town in the occupied West Bank city of Hebron, yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP

Govt plans buffer stocks to curb price shocks

FROM PAGE 12

He also said the government is working to launch an AI-based supply chain monitoring system to track each stage, including import, stock, wholesale, and retail.

Another DC, requesting anonymity, said several of his peers urged policymakers in commerce, agriculture, and food ministries to ensure an adequate stockpile of items such as soybean oil, potatoes, onions, and green chillies, the prices of which often go up, especially during Ramadan. The US-Israel war on Iran also sent fuel prices skyrocketing.

The DCs were told a decision would soon be made on whether the government would build cold storages or encourage entrepreneurs and that efforts would be made to increase imports of essential goods through the Trading Corporation of Bangladesh.

Meanwhile, the textile and jute ministry informed the DCs that the process of transferring around 50 closed and struggling mills to the private sector was underway. The government expects this initiative to create a large number of jobs for the youth.

Disaster Management and Relief Minister Asadul Habib Dulu said the government would provide three months of financial and food assistance to nearly 1 lakh families affected by heavy rain and flash floods in the haor regions.

Agriculture Minister Amin Ur Rashid said haor farmers will receive at least Tk 7,500 over the next three months, though the exact amount is yet to be finalised.

The DCs also proposed increasing VGF rice for the poor from 10kg to a higher amount and doubling the distribution of corrugated iron sheets from three bundles to six.

How BJP won West Bengal

AL JAZEERA ONLINE

Seema Das, a househelp in New Delhi, took on a two-day journey to reach her village in India's West Bengal state, changing trains to make sure she got home in time to vote in provincial elections.

Das had previously always voted for the All India Trinamool Congress (TMC) party under Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee, a centrist political force that has been in power in the eastern Indian state since 2011. But this time, she said, her mother-in-law had convinced her that "Didi" – a nickname for Mamata, which translates to elder sister in Bangla – "favours Muslims".

That's an accusation that Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Hindu majoritarian Bharatiya Janata Party has long levelled against the TMC, which emphasises religious pluralism and the protection of minority rights. But for 15 years, Mamata and her party have ruled the state of nearly 100 million, even as the BJP gained ground in a state where it had traditionally been a marginal player.

Yesterday, that changed. Modi's party won West Bengal, which, analysts say, will be consequential. They say the BJP has successfully used the religious polarisation card and leveraged underlying anti-incumbency to win.

Mamata founded the TMC in 1998, breaking with the Congress party, disillusioned with its refusal to frontally take on a coalition of communist parties that had ruled West Bengal since 1977.



Rising from a humble background, the lawyer-turned-student activist-turned-politician finally defeated the communists to win the state in 2011. Since Modi became PM of India in 2014, she emerged as a key challenger to the BJP – framing her politics, especially her defence of Bengal's Muslims, as an act of opposition to Hindu majoritarianism.

She also launched a series of women-centric welfare schemes and pushed back against controversial land acquisition projects sought by big industry.

Rahul Verma, an election observer who

teaches politics at the Shiv Nadar University in Chennai, emphasised that "without serious anti-incumbency, West Bengal would not have gotten this kind of result."

TMC failed to "offer anything new to the voters and to beat strong anti-incumbency sentiments against it", said Praveen Rai, a political analyst at the Centre for the Study of Developing Societies, in New Delhi.

Before the polling in West Bengal, the ECI carried out a so-called revision of its electoral rolls through a Special Intensive Revision (SIR), which removed more than nine million people – nearly 12 percent of the state's 76 million voters – from the voting list.

Nearly six million of them were declared absentee or deceased, while the remaining three million were unable to vote because no special tribunals could hear their cases in the short timeframe available before the elections.

TMC and other opposition parties in several states have called out the discrepancies in the revision of the voter list, accusing the ECI of siding with BJP. Right activists and observers believe that the exercise disproportionately disenfranchised Muslims before the election.

However, the analysts who spoke with Al Jazeera, including Sircar and Verma, agreed that the voter revision exercise alone could not have delivered such a decisive victory for the BJP.



Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Office of the Chief Commercial Manager (East)
Bangladesh Railway, Chattogram.

No: 54.01.1500.107.05.144.25-1066

Date: 04-05-2026

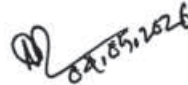
Corrigendum-01

e-Tender is invited in the National e-GP system Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) by Chief Commercial Manager (East), Bangladesh Railway, CRB, Chattogram (Tender ID:1256302 & 1256305), (Ref: No: 54.01.1500.107.05.144.25-907) for the Procurement of Physical Services is amended/Modified as stated below:

Tender ID		1265302		1265305	
Sl.	Field	Old value	New value	Old value	New value
1	Document last selling/downloading date & time	06-May-2026 10:00	17-May-2026 10:00	06-May-2026 10:00	17-May-2026 10:00
2	Last date & time for Tender/proposal Security Submissioq	06-May-2026 11:30	17-May-2026 11:30	06-May-2026 11:30	17-May-2026 11:30
3	Closing date & time	06-May-2026 12:00	17-May-2026 12:00	06-May-2026 12:15	17-May-2026 12:15
4	Opening date & time	06-May-2026 12:00	17-May-2026 12:00	06-May-2026 12:15	17-May-2026 12:15

TDS 21.1 of the Tender document have been modified & updated and made available in the e-GP system. This Corrigendum Notice will be an integral part of the Tender Document.

এস (২৬)(২৫৫)


(Md. Mahbubur Rahman)
Chief Commercial Manager (East)
Bangladesh Railway, Chattogram

GD-1008

গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার

প্রধান বন সংরক্ষকের দপ্তর

বন অধিদপ্তর

বন ভবন, আগারগাঁও, শেরেবাংলা নগর, ঢাকা-১২০৭।

রচনা প্রতিযোগিতা

বন অধিদপ্তর কর্তৃক আয়োজিত জাতীয় বৃক্ষরোপণ অভিযান ও বৃক্ষমেলা ২০২৬ উপলক্ষে বৃক্ষরোপণ, বৃক্ষের পরিচর্যা, বন, বন্যপ্রাণী, জীববৈচিত্র্য সংরক্ষণ ও বৃক্ষের উপকারিতা সম্পর্কে সচেতনতা বৃদ্ধির লক্ষ্যে স্কুল, কলেজ, বিশ্ববিদ্যালয় এবং মাদ্রাসা পর্যায়ের ছাত্র/ছাত্রীদের মধ্যে রচনা প্রতিযোগিতার আয়োজন করা হয়েছে। সারাদেশের আগ্রহী ছাত্র/ছাত্রীদেরকে নিম্নবর্ণিত নিয়মাবলী ও শর্ত মোতাবেক মোট ৫(পাঁচ)টি গুপে রচনা প্রতিযোগিতায় অংশগ্রহণ করার জন্য অনুরোধ করা যাচ্ছে।

গুপ	রচনার বিষয়বস্তু	সর্বোচ্চ শব্দ সংখ্যা
১. 'ক' গুপঃ স্কুল পর্যায়ে অধ্যয়নরত	“বৃক্ষরোপণে সাজাই দেশ সবার আগে বাংলাদেশ।”	৫০০
২. 'খ' গুপঃ কলেজ পর্যায়ে অধ্যয়নরত		৭৫০
৩. 'গ' গুপঃ বিশ্ববিদ্যালয় কলেজ/ বিশ্ববিদ্যালয় পর্যায়ে অধ্যয়নরত		১০০০
৪. 'ঘ' গুপঃ মাদ্রাসা পর্যায়ে অধ্যয়নরত		৫০০
৫. 'ঙ' গুপঃ সিনিয়র মাদ্রাসা পর্যায়ে অধ্যয়নরত		৭৫০

শর্তাবলী/নিয়মাবলী :

১. আগ্রহী ছাত্র/ছাত্রীদেরকে বাংলা অথবা ইংরেজী ভাষায় উল্লিখিত বিষয়ে রচনা স্বহস্তে লিখতে হবে।

২. ছাত্র/ছাত্রীদের অবশ্যই অধ্যয়নের প্রমাণস্বরূপ নিজ নিজ শিক্ষা প্রতিষ্ঠান প্রধানের প্রত্যয়ন পত্র রচনার সাথে সংযুক্ত করতে হবে।

৩. সুপারিশকৃত রচনার মূলকপি এবং শিক্ষা প্রতিষ্ঠান প্রধান কর্তৃক সত্যায়িত পাসপোর্ট সাইজের ২(দুই) কপি ছবিসহ অফিস চলাকালীন সময়ে ডাকযোগে অথবা সরাসরি নিম্নবর্ণিত ঠিকানায় আগামী ০৪.০৬.২০২৬ তারিখের মধ্যে অবশ্যই পৌছাতে হবে। বিলম্বে পৌছলে রচনা গ্রহণ করা হবে না।

৪. প্রতিযোগীর নাম, শিক্ষা প্রতিষ্ঠানের নাম ও ঠিকানা, শ্রেণী, পিতা/মাতা/অভিভাবকের নাম ও যোগাযোগের ঠিকানা, টেলিফোন/মোবাইল নম্বর বাংলায় ও ইংরেজীতে আলাদা কাগজে লিপিবদ্ধ করে রচনার সাথে পাঠাতে হবে।

৫. খামের উপর প্রতিযোগিতার “গুপ” উল্লেখ করে “রচনা প্রতিযোগিতা” কথাটি লিখতে হবে। প্রত্যেক “গুপ” এ প্রথম, দ্বিতীয় ও তৃতীয় স্থান অধিকারীকে পুরস্কার প্রদান করা হবে।

৬. নির্ধারিত শব্দ সংখ্যার মধ্যে রচনা প্রস্তুত করতে হবে। রচনার শব্দ সংখ্যা ১০% এর অধিক হলে রচনা মূল্যায়নের জন্য বিবেচিত হবে না এবং ১০% এর মধ্যে হলে ৯০ নম্বর ধরে মূল্যায়ন করা হবে।

রচনা প্রেরণের ঠিকানা :

লিগ্যাল ইউনিট, কক্ষ নং-৪০২, বন ভবন, শেরেবাংলা নগর, আগারগাঁও, ঢাকা-১২০৭
ফোন : ০২-৫৫০০৬৭৮০ (অফিস)
মোবাইল : ০১৭৬১-৪৯৪৬২১
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৪০২/০৪/২০২৬

মোহাম্মদ রোকসেনা সুলতানা)
উপবন সংরক্ষক (অ: দা:) লিগ্যাল ইউনিট
বন ভবন, আগারগাঁও, ঢাকা ও সদস্য-সচিব
রচনা প্রতিযোগিতা আয়োজক উপ-কমিটি
জাতীয় বৃক্ষরোপণ অভিযান ও বৃক্ষমেলা ২০২৬

GD-999

বাংলাদেশ বেসামরিক বিমান চলাচল কর্তৃপক্ষ

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নথি নং- ৩০.৩১.০০০০.২৩১.৫১.০০৫৭.২২/১০৩২

তারিখ: ১৭ বৈশাখ ১৪৩৩ বঙ্গাব্দ
৩০ এপ্রিল ২০২৬ খ্রি:াব্দ

ইজারা দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি

এতদ্বারা সর্বসাধারণের অবগতির জন্য জানানো যাচ্ছে যে, বাংলাদেশ বেসামরিক বিমান চলাচল কর্তৃপক্ষের আওতাধীন হযরত শাহজালাল আন্তর্জাতিক বিমানবন্দর, ঢাকা’র নিম্নবর্ণিত উল্লেখিত ইজারাস্থল বেবিটকের বিদ্যমান ইজারানীতিমালা,২০১৯ এর আলোকে আর্থিক সন (জুলাই-জুন) বিবেচনায় ইজারাস্থল হস্তান্তরের তারিখ হতে প্রতি বছর নবায়নের শর্তে প্রাথমিকভাবে ০৩ (তিন) বছরের জন্য ইজারা প্রদান করা হবে, যা পরবর্তীতে বিধি মোতাবেক নবায়নযোগ্য। ইজারা গ্রহণে ইচ্ছুক ব্যক্তি/ ব্যক্তি মালিকানাধীন প্রতিষ্ঠান/সংস্থার নিকট হতে নিম্নবর্ণিত শর্তে ইজারা দরপত্র আহবান করা যাচ্ছে। দরপত্র সিডিউল নির্ধারিত নগদ মূল্যে (অফেরতযোগ্য) তফসিল মোতাবেক দরপত্র দাখিলের পূর্বদিন পর্যন্ত অফিস চলাকালীন সময়ের মধ্যে সম্পত্তি ব্যবস্থাপনা বিভাগ, সদর দপ্তর অর্থ বিভাগ, হাশাআবির’র রাজস্ব বিভাগ, পিএ টু সদস্য (পরিঃ ও পরিঃ) ও পিএ টু প্রধান প্রকৌশলী’র দপ্তর হতে ক্রয় করা যাবে।

নিম্নবর্ণিত তফসীল অনুযায়ী সকাল ৯.০০ টা হতে বেলা ১২.০০ টা পর্যন্ত পরিচালক (সম্পত্তি ব্যবস্থাপনা), প্রশাসন বিভাগ, ৬ষ্ঠ তলা (5th Floor), সদর দপ্তর, সিএএবি এর দপ্তরে রক্ষিত দরপত্র বাস্তবে দরপত্র গ্রহণ করা হবে এবং একই দিনে বেলা ১২.৩০ টায় দরপত্র দাতাদের উপস্থিতিতে (যদি কেউ উপস্থিত থাকেন) দরপত্র বাস্তব খোলা হবে।

ক্র: নং	ইজারাস্থলের বিবরণ	কর্তৃপক্ষের কাংখিত ইজারামূল্য (বার্ষিক)	সিডিউল মূল্য (অফেরতযোগ্য)	১ম বার দরপত্র দাখিলের তারিখ	১ম বার কাংখিত দর পাওয়া না গেলে ২য় বার দরপত্র দাখিলের তারিখ	২য় বার কাংখিত দর পাওয়া না গেলে ৩য় বার দরপত্র দাখিলের তারিখ
১.	হাশাআবির’র এয়ারপোর্ট রেন্ট্রেক্ট সলন্স দোকান নং-০৪ (আয়তন: ১৬০ বঃ ফুঃ)	১২,১০,০০০/- (বারো লক্ষ দশ হাজার) টাকা +ভ্যাট	১০০০/-(এক হাজার) টাকা	১৮-০৫-২০২৬খ্রি:	০২-০৬-২০২৬ খ্রি:	১৫-০৬-২০২৬ খ্রি:
২.	হাশাআবির’র এয়ারপোর্ট রেন্ট্রেক্ট সলন্স দোকান নং-০৫ (আয়তন: ১৬০ বঃ ফুঃ)	১৫,১০,০০০/- (পনের লক্ষ দশ হাজার) টাকা	১০০০/-(এক হাজার) টাকা+ভ্যাট			
৩.	হাশাআবির’র এয়ারপোর্ট রেন্ট্রেক্ট সলন্স দোকান নং-০৬ (আয়তন: ৭২ বঃ ফুঃ)	৬,৭১,০৪৬/- (ছয় লক্ষ একাত্তর হাজার ছেচল্লিশ) টাকা	৫০০/-(পাঁচশত) টাকা+ভ্যাট			

শর্তাবলী

১। দরপত্র দাতাকে আর্নেস্টিমানি হিসেবে বাংলাদেশের যে কোন তফসীলি ব্যাংক হতে বার্ষিক উদ্ধৃত বছরের ১০% (শতকরা দশ ভাগ) হারে ব্যাংক ড্রাফট/পে-অর্ডার নির্বাহী পরিচালক, হযরত শাহজালাল আন্তর্জাতিক বিমান বন্দর, ঢাকা’র অনুকূলে ইজারা দরপত্রের সাথে দাখিল করতে হবে। অন্যথায় দরপত্র সরাসরি বাতিল বলে গণ্য হবে।

২। প্রাপ্ত দরপত্রের সর্বোচ্চ দর গ্রহণ করা হবে এবং ১ম বারে প্রাপ্ত দর কর্তৃপক্ষের কাংখিত দরের চেয়ে কম হলে ২য় বার উল্লেখিত তারিখে দরপত্র অনুষ্ঠিত হবে; অনুবৃত্তভাবে ২য় বার কাংখিত দর পাওয়া না গেলে ৩য় বার উল্লেখিত তারিখে দরপত্র অনুষ্ঠিত হবে।

৩। নিজ/প্রতিষ্ঠানের লেটার হেড প্যাডে ইজারা দরপত্র ক্রয়ের জন্য আবেদন করতে হবে।

৪। ইজারা গ্রহণে ইচ্ছুক ব্যক্তি/ব্যক্তি মালিকানাধীন প্রতিষ্ঠান/সংস্থা এক বা একাধিক ইজারাস্থলের জন্য দরপত্রে অংশ গ্রহণ করতে পারবেন। প্রতিটি ইজারাস্থলের জন্য আলাদা আলাদা সিডিউল ক্রয় ও দাখিল করতে হবে।

৫। সীল মোহরকৃত খামের উপর কাজের নাম সুস্পষ্টভাবে লিখে ইজারা দরপত্র দাখিল করতে হবে।

৬। ইতোপূর্বে ‘বেবিট’ কর্তৃপক্ষের ইজারা গ্রহণকারী ব্যক্তি/প্রতিষ্ঠান দরপত্র দাখিলের ক্ষেত্রে হযরত শাহজালাল আন্তর্জাতিক বিমানবন্দরের হিসাব ও রাজস্ব শাখা হতে কোন বকেয়া নেই মর্মে প্রত্যয়ন দাখিল করতে হবে; অন্যথায় দরপত্র স্বয়ংক্রিয়ভাবে বাতিল বলে গণ্য হবে।

৭। ইজারা প্রদানের ক্ষেত্রে দরপত্রে উল্লেখিত শর্তাবলী এবং ইজারানীতিমালা,২০১৯ এর শর্তাবলী প্রযোজ্য হবে।

৮। বিস্তারিত শর্তাবলী দরপত্র সিডিউল হতে জানা যাবে।

৯। কর্তৃপক্ষ কোন কারণ দর্শানো ছাড়াই ইজারা দরপত্র গ্রহণ বা আংশিক বাতিল বা সম্পূর্ণ ইজারা দরপত্র বাতিল করার ক্ষমতা সংরক্ষণ করেন।

৯-৩০.৩১.০০০০.০৫১.০৬.০০১.২৬/২০০

তারিখ: ০৩/০৫/২০২৬ খ্রি.

৪৫৬০৪৭২৩

ইমরুল হাসান
পরিচালক (সম্পত্তি ব্যবস্থাপনা) (প্রতিষ্ঠা)

GD-997

Measles disaster warrants answers

Govt must open inquiry to establish individual responsibility

Measles has killed more than 300 children since mid-March and infected more than 47,000 across Bangladesh. This is an avoidable disaster that demands accountability from interim government leaders who chose to dismantle a functional system without the competence to rebuild it. The country's measles vaccination coverage rose steadily for two decades, becoming an international model for low-income countries. That record has now been squandered with shocking negligence by the past interim government.

The failure follows a depressingly familiar pattern: a new administration, suspicious of its predecessor's institutional choices, opts to restructure it. The Health, Population and Nutrition Sector Programme—a framework in place since 1998—was scrapped in March 2025 without an adequate exit plan. “Bridging projects” meant to cover the transition were not approved until November 2025. Vaccine procurement stalled. Medicine supplies to more than 14,000 community clinics dwindled, and the buffer stocks that had provided a critical safety margin were exhausted. Furthermore, Bangladesh had procured vaccines through Unicef under a well-established direct procurement method. Officials changed this arrangement, directing that half the supply be obtained through open tender—despite having no experience with the process and despite explicit warnings against the change from Unicef. Not a single vaccine arrived through either of the new methods.

In public health, as in construction, you do not tear down a load-bearing wall before you have something in place to hold up the roof. The interim administration violated this principle. It suspended operational plans, eliminated the associated manpower structures, shifted funding to a revenue budget requiring approval from multiple cabinet committees, and then appeared surprised when the system seized up. Prof Sayedur Rahman, special assistant to the chief adviser for health in the interim administration, says officials were “not accustomed to the new system” and that “bureaucratic inertia” caused the delays. He claims that Unicef’s warning reached him only on December 30, 2025, leaving little time to act. But warnings of declining coverage had been sounded by epidemiologists long before that. A nationwide supplementary measles campaign—already overdue since 2020—was pushed back to April 2026. That decision alone reflects a startling misreading of urgency.

The human consequences are painful. Among confirmed measles patients, 74 percent had received neither dose of the vaccine while 14 percent had received only one. These are children who fell through a gap the health ministry itself created and then failed to close. Two additional campaigns—for deworming tablets and Vitamin A supplements—have also remained suspended for over a year, a disruption experts believe worsened children’s vulnerability to infection.

Reform requires contingency planning and recognition that failure in the health sector is measured in lives harmed or lost. The interim government’s actions shockingly fell short. The lack of accountability warrants a probe committee—one with the authority to establish individual responsibility. The deaths of children are tragic. Those who dismantled this programme must answer for each of these deaths.

Form a permanent media commission

BNP’s pledge must translate into urgent, credible action

The urgent need for reform in our media sector has once again come to the fore, as journalists renew their calls for a permanent media commission to enforce self-regulation of the media industry. The BNP government made an election pledge to deliver this reform, but implementation of that promise is yet to begin. The information minister has now assured that the government will “definitely” move forward with such a plan. While we welcome this intent, our experience suggests that assurances alone are not enough; the government must act quickly to implement it.

Successive governments have historically regulated media, sometimes creating undue pressure. A properly constituted commission could bring all stakeholders, including the government, under a transparent framework. However, the proposal to form yet another consultative committee risks unnecessary delay, since the groundwork has already been done. As senior journalists have noted, the Media Reform Commission has already submitted detailed recommendations on structural reforms and journalists’ rights. These must not be left unimplemented. The government should clearly state which recommendations it will implement immediately and which it will pursue in phases. Without such clarity, the initiative risks being stalled by indecision and bureaucracy.

Moreover, the blurring of lines between ownership and editorial independence continues to erode public trust, particularly when news is suppressed or altered to serve vested interests. This underscores the need for codes of conduct for both owners and editors. However, enforcement must not fall into government hands, as that could open the door for abuse. The media must take primary responsibility for upholding its own standards, with an independent body ensuring accountability.

Furthermore, there has been no visible progress in long-pending cases involving attacks on journalists and media institutions, such as the Sagar-Runi murder case and the attacks on *The Daily Star* and *Prothom Alo*. Sadly, the former case has been delayed indefinitely, while the home minister’s two-month deadline in the latter caseshas already expired. These cases must not be allowed to linger any further. The government must also ensure that no journalist remains in prison for their work, and that those detained on false charges are released promptly, while genuine allegations are addressed through due legal process. We expect nothing less from the BNP government.

The call for a permanent media commission is about restoring trust, protecting journalists, and strengthening democratic institutions. If the government is serious, it must move beyond rhetoric with a clear roadmap, swift reforms, the release of unjustly detained journalists, and accountability for past abuses. Finally, the government should never see the press as an adversary. Its respect for press freedom must be reflected in laws, policies, and action.

Farmers of the haors are dying of despair



NO STRINGS ATTACHED

Aasha Mehreen Amin
is joint editor at The Daily Star.

AASHA MEHREEN AMIN

A plateful of rice may be considered an unhealthy overindulgence for those of us with sedentary lifestyles. Yet the Bangalee spirit cannot be satisfied in any other way. Despite health warnings, we savour each morsel of that white, fluffy carbohydrate, a staple for most of the population. Rarely do we, however, think of the hands behind it all—the endless hours spent planting, cultivating, threshing, and drying before the grain finally makes its way to our kitchens. Most of us urbanites remain distanced, physically and emotionally, from the farmers who break their backs to grow food, not just rice, for the nation.

How many of us know, for example, that acres upon acres of Boro paddy in the haor region have been submerged in water after torrential rains even before the monsoon? It is just as unlikely that we know about the farmers who, after helplessly watching their precious crops ruined, have collapsed and died of heartbreak. Fifty-five-year-old Ahad Mia of Nasirnagar upazila in Brahmanbaria is one of them, who could not bear the sight of his ready-to-harvest paddy submerged in sudden rain. On Saturday, he lost consciousness on the spot and died soon after, his final thoughts perhaps of his family, how they would survive, or how they would repay the loan he had taken to cultivate the land.

Several other farmers in the area have also fallen ill after experiencing similar losses. Meanwhile, in Kishoreganj, Akhter Hossain, a 60-year-old farmer, also collapsed and died upon seeing his submerged paddy field in Austagram haor.

Farmers in the haor districts are clearly in a desperate situation. Heavy pre-monsoon rainfall over the past week or so has been threatening to destroy their painstakingly grown paddy just before harvest. Breached embankments and an acute shortage of harvesters and labourers have made saving the crops all the more challenging.

The haor region contributes about 20 percent of the country’s Boro rice production, highlighting the importance of this harvest for our food security. This year, in seven haor districts, Boro has been cultivated on 4.55 lakh hectares of land, while harvesting has been completed on 3.24 lakh hectares so far, according to sources at the Department of



Acres upon acres of Boro paddy in the haor region have been submerged in water after torrential rains even before the monsoon. PHOTO: SHEIKH NASIR

Agricultural Extension’s (DAE) Field Services Wing. However, heavy rainfall between April 26 and May 2 has submerged 46,730 hectares—or 10.27 percent of the total haor land—which underscores the gravity of the situation.

This aligns with a decade-long trend where, as per a report by this daily, early pre-monsoon rainfall has been excessive in the northeastern haor basin, triggering flash floods that destroy crops faster than farmers can harvest them. In 2017 and 2022, floods destroyed almost all their Boro harvest. The recent heavy rainfall and subsequent effects are a painful reminder of those bleak days.

Farmers are reportedly facing multiple hurdles at once. While they

have managed to harvest a large part of the Boro paddy in haor districts, they are struggling with the rest. Harvester machines do not function in water, and farmers are finding it difficult to secure labourers willing to work in watery fields. Labour has, moreover, become too costly—around Tk 2,000 to harvest paddy from one katha—leaving many farmers with virtually nothing. Even when the paddy is harvested, it is often wet and difficult to sell in the market except at heavily discounted prices, which again means little to no return for farmers.

The situation is worse for those who have taken out loans before cultivation. How will they repay their debts? How will they feed their families? These questions are pushing many into utter despair. Early rains and flash floods are not new phenomena. Yet every year,

appeared in some areas; continuous rainfall threatens to weaken or damage others. Authorities are now on alert to protect newly constructed dykes through regular monitoring, but could this not have been done before the rains began?

According to a DAE official, measures were taken from April, including the appointment of 11 civil service officials in Sunamganj and three more in Netrokona, Habiganj, and Kishoreganj to bring in labourers from other districts and mobilise local support for harvesting. Given that the current government has only been in office for over two months, these are encouraging signs. However, the government must learn from this experience and ensure that these and other protective measures are implemented well in advance of rainy seasons in the future.

Time, however, is running out fast for the haor farmers. Rivers continue to swell, and weather forecasts predict more rain, leaving the remaining unharvested rice crops at risk. Making matters worse, there has been an unusual frequency of lightning of late, claiming 38 lives across the country in April—more than half of them farmers and labourers working in paddy fields. This is naturally discouraging the latter from working in such dangerous conditions.

The prime minister has recently announced that the government will support affected farmers for three months. Already, dryer machines for wet grain are being mobilised, according to the DAE. These emergency measures may provide some relief, but farmers’ hardships have been persistent and deeply structural. With rising fertiliser and fuel costs, driven mostly by the war in Middle East, farmers are already grappling with high production expenses. Now, with the catastrophe caused by early rains, many are being forced to sell their crops at low prices, incurring further losses. The government must ensure that farmers receive fair prices for their produce.

The coming months will be difficult, especially for those who have already lost so much. So, government support must be sustained year-round and substantial enough to provide farmers with a basic sense of security. Safeguarding those who feed the nation is something that we cannot afford to fail at.

INTERNATIONAL DAY OF THE MIDWIFE

More midwives can reduce reliance on unnecessary C-section



Catherine Breen-Kamkong
is UNFPA representative in Bangladesh.

CATHERINE BREEN-KAMKONG

May 5 marks the International Day of the Midwife, with this year’s theme being “One Million More Midwives.” For Bangladesh, this is a call to complete a journey that began with great promise. The country has earned global recognition as a “Champion Country” for its rapid progress in reducing maternal mortality and establishing a professional midwifery cadre to offer high-quality sexual and reproductive health services, including safe, respectful maternity care. As the lead technical partner in this journey, UNFPA has been standing alongside the Government of Bangladesh for over 15 years, helping to build international-standard curricula, faculty, and regulatory frameworks that underpin this vital profession. Today, over 11,000 midwives in Bangladesh have graduated and are licensed to work.

Despite the strong foundational work, progress in deploying these professionals is taking too long. Maternal and newborn death rates still remain high, with approximately 4,000 women losing their lives every year during childbirth in 2023. The commitments made to midwifery in Bangladesh have yet to translate into enough professionals standing with women to save lives. To regain momentum, we must recognise that investing in midwives is not a health expense but an investment in

women’s lives and a development best-buy to build a healthy, resilient, and prosperous nation. Here, we can cite what experts call the “triple impact” of midwifery.

The impact on health: Quality over medicalisation

The UNFPA’s technical expertise ensures that midwives are trained to international standards, capable of providing 90 percent of essential sexual and reproductive health services. When midwives lead care, we see a dramatic reduction in unnecessary medical interventions. Increasingly, we see health facilities over-medicalising childbirth. To counter this, we need midwives who can champion safe, natural delivery. By reducing the reliance on unnecessary Caesarean sections and other surgical interventions, midwives not only improve the health of mothers and newborns but also protect families from staggering out-of-pocket medical expenses.

The impact on the economy: A 16-fold return

The economic case for midwifery is undeniable. Midwives provide a cost-effective pathway to serving the hardest-to-reach communities, ensuring that high-quality care is available at the primary level closest to where women live and not in facilities

that are overburdened with critically ill patients. Global evidence shows that in countries like Bangladesh, every dollar invested in midwifery can yield a return of up to 16 times that amount. By preventing long-term disabilities in newborns and keeping mothers healthy and productive, midwives directly contribute to the growth of Bangladesh’s human capital.

The impact on resilience: Climate and crisis

As one of the world’s most climate-vulnerable nations, Bangladesh faces constant threats from cyclones, floods, and rising sea levels. When disasters strike and hospitals become inaccessible, midwives remain steadfast with women and adolescents in their communities. UNFPA and the Government of Bangladesh have worked together to ensure midwives are the first responders to natural disasters and climate change, ensuring that a woman’s right to a safe birth is not disrupted during climate-related crises. Whether in a remote coastal village or the crowded refugee camps of Cox’s Bazar, midwives provide the continuity of care that saves lives.

For these benefits to be realised, a midwife needs professional training and a supportive workplace. This means she must be educated in accredited institutions, licensed, fairly paid, and given the authority to practise the full range of her skills. A midwife needs an enabling environment to perform her work of saving lives and bringing dignity to women. In practical terms, this means that health facilities need to be equipped with water and sanitation, electricity, communication and refrigeration equipment, and other required supplies. Life-saving maternal drugs and contraceptives must be available continuously

without disruption.

The country needs an estimated 25,000 midwifery posts in primary health centres by 2030. The systematic creation of midwifery posts and the rapid deployment of these professionals into primary health centres represent the critical next chapter of this success story. Accelerating this process is not just a high priority; it is a vital step towards strengthening national resilience. Until every woman in Bangladesh, regardless of her income or location, has access to high-quality midwifery care, the country remains at risk of falling behind in meeting its ambitious development goals.

Investing in midwives means investing for the rights, dignity, and equity of every woman in Bangladesh. We need more midwives in posts, in health facilities, and in our communities. By placing just three midwives in each of the 3,500 union-level health facilities across the country, we can create a 24/7 lifeline for mothers. These facilities already exist; the infrastructure is there. By bringing midwives into these local hubs, we can move life-saving care from a distant hospital directly to each village’s doorstep.

The advancements achieved to date are a testament to the efforts of the government and people of Bangladesh. UNFPA will continue to support the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare in ensuring these new posts for midwives are filled by highly skilled professionals who are supported by a workplace that values their expertise.

When we empower midwives, we save women’s lives and the lives of their newborns. What better way can there be to secure a healthy and bright future of Bangladesh for generations to come?

Advancing Bangladesh’s energy sovereignty for a resilient future



MACRO MIRROR

Dr Fahmida Khatun
is an economist and executive director at the Centre for Policy Dialogue (CPD). Views expressed in this article are the author's own.

FAHMIDA KHATUN

Over more than five decades, Bangladesh has progressed reasonably well in socioeconomic terms compared to many of its peers among the least developed and developing countries. Strong economic growth over many years—largely driven by export-oriented industrialisation, especially the readymade garments sector, high remittances, and good agricultural harvests—has significantly reduced poverty. At the same time, it has led to accelerated urbanisation and increased energy demand across industries, transport, and households. Despite these achievements, Bangladesh's energy infrastructure remains structurally weak and has not developed adequately to support the long-term needs of a growing economy.

Energy is no longer merely a sectoral concern. It is now at the core of macroeconomic stability, fiscal sustainability, and national security. As Bangladesh is set to graduate from its Least Developed Country (LDC) status in November 2026 and shift towards a more diversified and higher-value industrial base, the resilience of its energy system will increasingly shape the pace and quality of this transformation. The current energy model—characterised by dependence on imports, exposure to volatile global markets, and rising fiscal burdens—is becoming unsustainable fast.

Currently, Bangladesh's energy portfolio is predominantly dependent on fossil fuels, notably natural gas, oil, and imported coal. Domestic natural gas production, once the foundation of the power sector, has been progressively declining relative to national demand. Domestic natural gas reserves are rapidly depleting as well. Consequently, Bangladesh has increasingly relied on imported liquefied natural gas (LNG) to supplement its energy needs. As a result, Bangladesh has become one of the emerging economies vulnerable to fluctuations in global gas prices.

This transition has incurred substantial costs. During the global energy crisis of 2022–23, LNG spot prices rose to unprecedented

levels. Bangladesh was compelled to curtail LNG procurements, leading to gas shortages, loadshedding, and disruptions to industrial productivity. Foreign exchange reserves declined sharply during this period, from over \$46.47 billion on November 3, 2021 to \$26.42 billion on November 1, 2023. This was due to the combined effects of increased import expenses and macroeconomic adjustments. Besides, the fiscal burden increased as subsidies allocated to the power and energy sectors, particularly through the Bangladesh Power Development Board, expanded significantly to mitigate domestic tariff increases.

Recent geopolitical tensions in the Middle East have once again exposed Bangladesh's energy security to renewed fragility. A substantial share of global oil and LNG trade passes through the Strait of Hormuz. Hence, the disruption in this corridor has immediate

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ripple effects on global prices and supply chains. For Bangladesh, which relies heavily on imported fuels from the Gulf region, such disruptions have translated directly into higher import costs, high price pressures, and increased fiscal strain.

These recurring shocks underscore a fundamental truth: Bangladesh's current energy infrastructure is inherently fragile and increasingly unsustainable. The traditional discourse on energy transition, though important, primarily focuses on climate change mitigation and does not fully address the issue's pressing nature. For Bangladesh, the transition must therefore be reframed with an emphasis on energy sovereignty.

diminishes reliance on volatile international markets. Over time, this will reduce import expenses, alleviate pressure on foreign exchange reserves, and enhance fiscal stability.

Third, it can help garner stronger public support. Energy policies in Bangladesh often focus on tariffs and subsidies, but linking renewable energy to price stability and reliability makes its benefits more visible to citizens. Renewable energy is not

Alternative models, such as rooftop solar installations, floating solar systems on water bodies, and the solarisation of public infrastructure, present substantial potential. Industrial zones, export processing zones, and public buildings can serve as significant energy generation centres.

Secondly, it is essential to modernise the grid. As renewable energy sources are naturally variable, a more flexible and responsive electrical grid is required. Investing in transmission infrastructure, smart grid technologies, and energy storage will be key to incorporating higher levels of renewables while maintaining reliability.

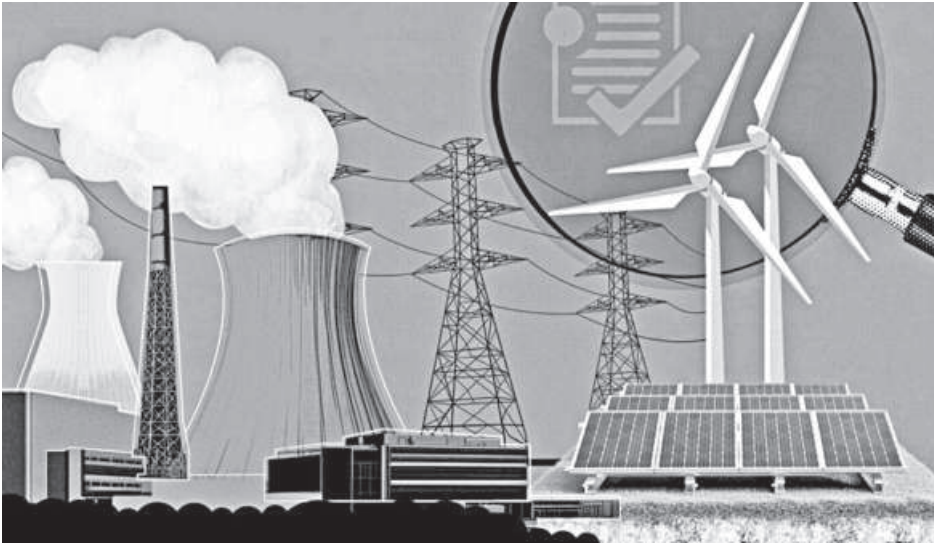
Thirdly, enhancing financing mechanisms is essential. Although renewable energy projects often need large initial investments, their operating costs are generally low. Bangladesh can leverage blended finance, concessional funding, and risk-sharing instruments to attract private sector investment. Institutions such as the World Bank, IMF, and dedicated climate funds can serve as catalysts to facilitate this transition.

Fourthly, consistent policies and clear regulations are crucial. In the past, frequent changes to tariffs, procurement procedures, and contracts undermined investor confidence. Creating a stable and transparent policy environment is essential to encouraging the growth of renewable energy.

Fifthly, regional cooperation should be explored to support domestic initiatives. Trading electricity across borders with neighbouring countries can improve energy security by diversifying supply. Simultaneously, collaboration on regional grid infrastructure and renewable energy projects can realise economies of scale. These initiatives require political will.

Finally, demand-side management should not be ignored. Energy efficiency initiatives—such as upgrading industrial processes, adopting energy-efficient appliances, and enforcing stricter building standards—can significantly reduce total energy demand and ease the burden on the supply system.

While achieving energy sovereignty demands substantial investment, institutional capacity, and political will, the repercussions of inaction will be much more severe. Bangladesh needs to reduce its reliance on imported fuels and accelerate its shift towards locally generated renewable energy to safeguard economic stability, enhance resilience to global disruptions, and ensure a sustainable, self-reliant development path for the future.



FILE VISUAL: ANWAR SOHEL

Energy sovereignty is the ability of a country to secure reliable, affordable, and sustainable energy with reduced dependence on external sources. It requires strengthening domestic energy production and building a resilient system that can withstand global shocks. In today's world of geopolitical tensions, supply disruptions, and climate risks, energy sovereignty has become a strategic necessity rather than a privilege. This reframing of the perspective on addressing the energy crisis offers considerable analytical and policy benefits.

First, it strongly aligns with the principles of political economy. Energy sovereignty is closely linked to national security and economic independence, making it a persuasive narrative across the political spectrum. Unlike climate discourse, which is frequently viewed as externally influenced, the sovereignty approach directly corresponds with domestic priorities.

Secondly, it reinforces the economic justification for renewable energy. From the perspective of sovereignty, each megawatt of domestically generated solar or wind power

only environmentally friendly but also less vulnerable to sudden price shocks caused by global geopolitical crises.

Fourth, it aligns with long-term strategic goals. Bangladesh's aspiration to become an upper-middle-income country will require a more diversified industrial base, including sectors such as electronics, pharmaceuticals, and light engineering. These sectors require reliable, competitively priced energy. A domestically anchored renewable energy system can provide that foundation while also supporting global commitments under the Paris Agreement.

Despite these advantages, Bangladesh's progress in renewable energy remains modest due to structural constraints like limited land availability, grid integration challenges, financing barriers, and policy uncertainty. Addressing these constraints requires the development of a coherent, coordinated policy framework.

First and foremost, land-use planning should be re-envisioned. Given Bangladesh's high population density, large-scale solar parks pose considerable challenges.

As a flood-prone country, Bangladesh needs stronger early flood warning systems



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KAZI AMDADUL HOQUE

The world is going through times of high climatic insecurity, exacerbated by unchecked global warming. Low-lying countries, such as Bangladesh, find themselves to be especially susceptible to cyclones, floods, river erosion, and more. In Moulvibazar, recent heavy rainfall has caused flooding, leading to irrecoverable crop losses. Although timely adaptive measures have made Bangladesh adept at cyclone precautions, rescue efforts, and makeshift shelters, early warning and response systems for floods have continued to fall short of expectations. According to a World Bank report in 2020, Bangladesh tops the list of flood-prone countries globally, with an estimated 20 percent of its land area vulnerable to submergence. Additionally, around 60 percent of the country's population is exposed to high flood risk, more so than in any other country in the world besides the Netherlands.

The population density in Bangladesh is 1,319 per square kilometre, and as per the World Bank's April 2026 Bangladesh Development Update, the country's poverty rate increased to 21.4 percent in 2025 from 18.7 percent in 2022, adding 14 lakh more poor people in 2025. Meanwhile, Bangladesh's Human Capital Index score of 0.46 reflects gaps in education, healthcare, and skills, which also limit communities' adaptation capacity.

The northern areas of Bangladesh, such as Gaibandha, Kurigram, and Chilmari, are in close

proximity to major rivers such as Brahmaputra, Teesta, and Jamuna. In 2022, the north and north-eastern regions of Bangladesh were hit by unprecedented flooding, leading to the loss of 12 lives and impacting more than 70 lakh people.

In 2024, flash floods in the country's east destroyed 339,382 hectares of crops and displaced over 500,000 people. According to a 2021

We need to look at our early warning systems through a tech-forward lens. Incoming cyclones or floods should be trackable using mobile phones, satellite images, and waterflow systems. Villages can be assigned colours to signal levels of danger and safety. Each union has a local government information centre that could serve as an early warning hub for that community.

World Bank report, annual losses incurred by floods in Bangladesh amount to around \$2 billion.

Despite extensive data on the issue, early warning systems are still not intensive or community-centric. As of now, demarcated gauge lines, handled by the water resource authorities, are in place to measure dangerous levels of water flow.

When water levels threaten to reach or cross these lines, a warning goes out to state that flooding is possible in surrounding areas. What often goes unnoticed, however, is that these installations are sometimes quite far from the villages. Due to topographical diversity, there is hardly a way to discern when and at what speed the water level will hit the villages, located some distance away from the water level gauges. In Bangladesh, hydrological models for an effective early warning system suffer from a lack of upstream data.

According to one study including respondents from Sirajganj district, during 2015–2020, 71.81 percent of households didn't receive an early warning for flooding. Of the 28.29 percent which received early warning, 82.99 percent households responded by taking preparedness measures.

While early warnings are provided over radio and speaker announcements on regional and union scales, confirmed information on a community or village level is still out of reach. Simply calling for evacuation is often not enough. The ultra-poor residents of these areas spend years saving up for their homes, fields, and livestock. When they hear of a possible evacuation plan, they think of all the losses that await them. Savings and assets go underwater, and they become aid-dependent. However, when aid is discontinued, they do not have any source of income left. Even loans are hard to come by without any assets to show. More often than not, these victims are confused or in denial as to whether evacuation is indeed required.

Decentralising early warning systems

A 2019 United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR) report stated that investment in early warning systems could yield a tenfold return and help avoid losses, save lives, and enhance socioeconomic resilience.

We need to look at our early warning systems through a tech-forward lens. Incoming cyclones or floods should be trackable using mobile phones, satellite images, and waterflow systems. Villages can be assigned colours to signal levels of danger and safety. Each union has a local government information centre that could serve as an early warning hub for that community.

Instead of waiting to distribute aid during floods, disaster risk financing can be pushed for and demanded early on. This will not only reduce pressure on post-disaster aid but also help people innovate their own solutions to deal with the crisis.

Effective multi-hazard early warning systems

Multi-hazard early warning systems are only effective if they actually reach and are actionable by those who need them. Early warning systems convey critical information on potentially hazardous events and can yield the highest benefit-cost ratio of any adaptation investment. As per a 2019 report by the Global Commission on Adaptation, a 24-hour warning for an imminent storm or heatwave can cut the resulting damage by 30 percent, and spending \$800 million on such systems in developing countries would avoid losses of \$3–\$16 billion per year.

It is evidenced that loss of life can be

reduced if there is better uptake and understanding of necessary actions, as well as better flood forecasting.

A community-based approach is cheaper than a centralised system. While a central system is crucial, balancing the approach with people's engagement and the best technology available can make it all the more beneficial.

An effective multi-hazard community-based early warning system with engagement from the community, civil society and private sector is needed. Finally, the benefits will accrue only if early warnings lead to early action, which can very much depend on the credibility and available lead time of the warning information.

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Office of the Inspector General
Bangladesh Police
Police Headquarters, Dhaka.

Cancellation of International Tender Notice

Memo No-44.01.0000.058.07.019.25/420

Date: 04/05/2026.

The Invitation for International Tender Notice published in different national dailies as per Invitation tender ref No-44.01.0000.058.07.019.25/07(2025-2026) dated 15/03/2026 for the procurement of **Crew Served Machine Gun** in FY 2025-2026 is hereby **cancelled** in accordance with the Standard Tender Document (ITT 54) and Tender Notice (Special instructions 22-b).

This notice is issued with the approval of the competent authority.

(Md. Moniruzzaman, BPM-Sheba)
BP No-7806119738
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For Inspector General, Bangladesh Police
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GD-1001

People still call me ‘Ammajan’: Shabnam

SHAH ALAM SHAZU

One of the most celebrated romantic heroines of the 1960s, Shabnam remains an enduring icon of South Asian cinema. Her journey began with the Urdu-language film *Chanda*, directed by Ehtesham, where she made her debut as a leading lady. In Bangladesh, however, it was *Harano Din* that marked her breakthrough, earning immense audience appreciation and setting the stage for a career adorned with success.

Her popularity soared further with *Rajdhanir Bukey*, where she captivated audiences by lip-syncing to the memorable song *Tomare Legechhe Eto Je Bhalo, Chand Bujhi Tai Jane*. The performance cemented her place in the hearts of millions of cinema lovers.

Her acclaim was not confined to Bangladesh alone. Shabnam also enjoyed a successful career in Pakistani cinema, where she won the prestigious Nigar Award 13 times, an extraordinary achievement that speaks to her immense popularity and talent.

Widely regarded as one of the leading faces of the golden era of cinema, Shabnam delivered numerous memorable performances. However, after playing the titular role in *Ammajan* alongside Manna, she stepped away from the silver screen.

Reflecting on her career, she said, “My first film as a leading actress, *Harano Din*, received tremendous

audience appreciation. And my last film, *Ammajan*, was also a super-duper hit. So, I can say that both my first and last films have become timeless.”

When asked why she did not return to acting after *Ammajan*, and whether there was any sense of regret or grievance, she responded, “Not at all. It wasn’t about any disappointment. I simply did not find stories that I liked. Had I found something appealing, I would certainly have worked again.”

Speaking about her most recent visit to the Bangladesh Film Development Corporation (BFDC), she shared, “I went to the FDC for a short while, after many years. I cannot even recall how many years it has been. Once I entered, so many memories came flooding back. I noticed many changes inside.”

She added, “There were fewer people that day, perhaps it was a Friday. It made things easier for me. But I quietly cried while I was there. It felt strange. There was a kind of pain within. My eyes filled with tears.”

Despite stepping away from the spotlight, Shabnam continues to lead a grounded life. “I still go to the market regularly,” she said with a smile. “There is a market in Gulshan where I go. Everyone there recognises me, and they respect and love me. Even this morning, I



PHOTOS: STAR



went. As soon as I arrive, shopkeepers say, ‘Make way! ‘Ammajan’ has come!’”

She reflected warmly on this affection. “The love and respect people show me—being called *Ammajan*, that is a great blessing. I want to live with this love and respect. Above all, it is the love of people that matters most.”

On the subject of awards, she remains remarkably unfazed. “I have no regrets about awards. The love of people is far greater than any award. Awards fade with time, but people’s love remains.”

A native of Old Dhaka, Shabnam occasionally revisits her roots. “I still have many relatives there, so I go from time to time. It brings back so many memories. In those days, there were horse carriages—we used to ride around in them.”

As for her present life, she keeps things simple and fulfilling. “I spend my time reading books, watching television, and chatting with my son. I also enjoy cooking different things for him.”

When asked if she harbours any regrets, her answer is clear and content: “No. I have no regrets. I am grateful for what I have received and where I am in life. I always say—people’s love is the greatest thing of all.”

Odd Signature to launch debut album ‘JOGOTMONCHO’

Bangladeshi band Odd Signature is set to launch its debut album *Jogotmoncho* at a solo concert in Chattogram on May 15. The event will be held at the Engineers Institute, beginning at 4:00pm, with tickets priced at Tk 500.

Formed in 2017, the band gained popularity with narrative-driven songs but faced a setback in 2024 after a road accident that led to the death of vocalist Piyal. After a hiatus, they returned with new music and live performances. At the concert, the band will perform all tracks from the album, which will be released in an NFC-enabled CD format. A comic inspired by the album has also been developed, adding a visual storytelling dimension to the project.



WHAT’S THE HAPS?

‘A Shared Condition’

Mubtasim Alvee’s debut solo exhibition unfolds as a probing study of shared human fragility, where form and texture interrogate memory, identity, and collective experience. Curated by Mustafa Zaman, the show situates personal narratives within wider cultural tensions, offering a quietly unsettling, intellectually charged visual discourse.

DATE: FRIDAY–SATURDAY | MAY 8–16, 2026
TIME: 2 PM–8 PM
VENUE: ALLIANCE FRANÇAISE DE DHAKA, DHANMONDI



Dhaka to host Rabindra Sangeet festival marking Tagore’s birth anniversary

A two-day national Rabindra Sangeet festival will be held in Dhaka on May 8 and 9, marking the 165th birth anniversary of Rabindranath Tagore. Organised by the Bangladesh Rabindra Sangeet Shilpi Sangstha, the 37th edition will take place at the Liberation War Museum auditorium in Agargaon.

The festival will open at 4:00pm on May 8, with programmes running daily, including morning sessions from 10:00am. Around 150 performers, along with guest artistes, reciters and dancers, are set to participate. This year’s edition is dedicated to several late cultural figures, while the Kalim Sharafi Padak will be awarded to Rabindra Sangeet artiste Iflat Ara Dewan. Organisers say preparations are in the final stage, with rehearsals ongoing.

NEWS

HC stops GCC waste project

FROM PAGE 12
During a site visit on Friday afternoon, excavation work was seen underway. About 50 feet of the park’s boundary wall was demolished, and a road was being paved. Gazari trees were being felled as part of construction activities. Several people were supervising the work of around 20 workers. Site supervisor Mohammad Ifti said an STS facility was planned at the location and that he was overseeing the work on behalf of the GCC.

Workers said they were instructed to complete the job quickly.

Sabuj Mia, a worker, said they dug about four feet into the ground after breaking the boundary wall.

According to forest department sources, a contractor initially built a shed for workers on April 11. The forest department demolished it the next day during a drive. On April 13, a large group of people went there, broke the boundary wall, and resumed construction.

Ariful Islam, deputy ranger (range officer) of the national park, said they tried to stop the work. But due to the presence of around 200 people, it was not possible to resist with their limited manpower. The matter has been reported to the higher authorities, and relevant officials have already

conducted on-site inspections.

He added that under the Wildlife Conservation and Security Act, construction of any structure is prohibited within and around protected sanctuary areas.

Officials from the Department of Environment in Gazipur also inspected the site.

Deputy Director Arefin Badol told The Daily Star that environmental clearance is mandatory for constructing an STS, but the GCC has not obtained it. Their report recommended not building the STS at the location.

Ripon Ansari, general secretary of the Bhawal Garh Protection Movement, said the law was being openly violated and called for strict action against those responsible.

Talking to this newspaper, GCC Chief Executive Officer Sohel Hasan said the land where the STS is being constructed is not part of the national park. He added that the land is privately owned and has been leased by the city corporation. However, he acknowledged that the land is surrounded by the park on three sides and a highway is on the remaining side.

He said the project was undertaken due to the lack of alternative land. He also noted that the forest department

has raised objections.

Yesterday, the HC bench of Justice Bhishmadev Chakraborty and Justice Abdur Rahman issued the injunction after a writ petition had been filed by the Bangladesh Environmental Lawyers Association (Bela).

The court also issued a rule asking the respondents to explain why the unauthorised construction of STS by GCC on reserved forest land adjacent to the park and on privately owned land and their failure to prevent the continuous dumping of waste at the main entrance and various other locations in the park should not be declared illegal, unconstitutional, and against public interest.

Secretaries at the ministries of LG&D; and environment, forest and climate change; director general of Department of Environment and deputy director of its Gazipur district office; chief conservator of forests; divisional forest officer; assistant conservator of forests of Gazipur district office; and range officer of National Park (Wildlife Management and Nature Conservation Division); deputy commissioner and superintendent of police of Gazipur; and administrator and chief waste management officer of GCC have been made respondents to the rule.

Tears flow as Limon comes home

FROM PAGE 12
The 27-year-old was laid to rest at his family graveyard after his Namaz-e-Janaza following Maghrib prayers.

Earlier in the day, his body reached Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport in Dhaka around 8:40am.

“I raised my son with so much care. I never imagined my son would die this way,” Limon’s father told reporters at the airport.

“Only the Almighty knows what pain he went through,” he struggled to continue.

Limon’s uncle Ziaul said the family demands justice from both the Bangladesh and US governments.

At the airport, State Minister for Foreign Affairs Shama Obaed Islam received the body on behalf of the government and handed it over to Limon’s family.

At the time, she said the foreign ministry has been maintaining communications with US authorities to ensure a proper investigation into the double murder.

She expressed hope that the US authorities would complete a fair and thorough investigation and ensure

punishment for those responsible.

The state minister also assured the families of the two deceased students of the government’s continued support as per directives from the prime minister.

Though Limon’s ancestral home is in Laldoba, he grew up in the Mawna area of Gazipur. A meritorious student, he passed SSC from Mawna Model High School and HSC from Birsreshtha Munshi Abdur Rouf Public College.

Completing his undergraduate studies at Khulna University, he moved to America to pursue a PhD in geography, environmental science and policy at the University of South Florida in 2024.

Limon and another Bangladeshi student, Nahida Sultana Brishti, 27, went missing in Florida on April 16. A friend later informed the university authorities.

According to the Hillsborough County Sheriff’s Office, Limon’s body was recovered on April 24 near the Howard Frankland Bridge area following the interrogation of a suspect. The body bore multiple stab

wounds and was found dismembered inside black garbage bags.

Two days later, on April 26, fishermen spotted a black polythene bag while kayaking in a nearby mangrove area. Police later recovered dismembered human remains from the scene. At a press conference on April 30, authorities confirmed the remains belonged to Brishti.

In connection with the killings, Limon’s roommate, US citizen Hisham Abugarbeh, has been arrested.

Limon’s father said they still did not know why his son was killed, adding that most of what they have learnt has come from media reports.

Before his body was flown to Bangladesh, funeral prayers were held in the Tampa Bay area, attended by students of the University of South Florida and members of the Bangladeshi community.

Meanwhile, efforts are underway to bring back Brishti’s body. Officials said it is currently under the care of a funeral home, with plans to send it to Bangladesh on May 7. Her funeral prayers are slated for May 6 in Florida.

Chhatra Dal faces flak from grassroots

FROM PAGE 12
institutions and district units after years of weak organisational presence.

In Rangamati, a clash occurred yesterday over a programme organised by the newly formed partial committee of the district unit, as protesting leaders and newly appointed leaders faced off, leaving at least one person injured. As tension escalated, the local administration imposed Section 144 in the area to prevent further violence.

Army and police personnel were also deployed in parts of the town after two days of protests and counter-protests raised fears of further clashes, sources said.

AsimilaprotesteruptedinNoakhali, Nasir’s home district, where protesting leaders declared him “unwanted” following the announcement of the district committee.

After a 37-member district committee was announced, several hundred leaders and activists burned tyres and blocked roads in Majidee Town. Several crude bomb explosions were reported during the protest,

sparking panic in the area.

During the hours-long protest, commuters and students faced considerable distress.

The protesters alleged that the committee was formed without properly assessing the role of leaders who had remained active during difficult political periods. They also claimed that some leaders with weak organisational records were given posts due to lobbying and personal connections.

A faction of leaders in Kishoreganj also brought out a procession, alleging that supporters of the district party leader and a state minister were prioritised when the district committee was formed.

Protests were also seen in Cox’s Bazar, Dinajpur and in front of the BNP central office in Nayapaltan, where protesting leaders gathered to demand that the central leadership review the committees before discontent spreads further among grassroots activists.

Meanwhile, at least five district-level Chhatra Dal leaders announced their resignations on their Facebook

profiles, citing dissatisfaction over the committee formation process.

Several of them said they could not accept committees where those who “were absent from the field” had been rewarded while long-serving activists were ignored.

Central Chhatra Dal leaders, however, said the protests were unacceptable and went against BNP Chairman Tarique Rahman’s instruction to maintain discipline.

A central leader, preferring anonymity, said some of those protesting had failed to secure expected posts and were now trying to pressure the organisation.

“The party high command has repeatedly asked all leaders and activists to maintain discipline. Those taking to the streets against organisational decisions are defying that directive,” he said, adding that the central leadership would look into specific complaints, but indiscipline, road blockades and violence would not be tolerated.

(Our correspondents from Noakhali, Cox’s Bazar, Rangamati, and Kishoreganj contributed to the news.)

Janata to auction Globe Janakantha assets

FROM PAGE 12
The loans were disbursed in 2021 by Janata’s Dilkusha Corporate Branch following a recommendation from Salman F Rahman, the private industry and investment adviser to former Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina.

In August 2020, Salman wrote to Janata chairman recommending Tk 250 crore in loans as working capital for Globe Janakantha as the company had been adversely affected during the BNP Jamaat government.

Subsequently, the Janata board in September 2021 approved working capital loans of Tk 225 crore in favour of five entities of Globe Janakantha. Two months later, Bangladesh Bank provided a no-objection certificate (NOC).

Globe Janakantha Shilpa Paribar (GJSP) has eight entities: Globe Metal Complex, Globe Insecticides, Globe Cables, Globe Printers, Janakantha, Globe Construction, Globe Khamar Prokalpa and Globe Technologies.

Most of the companies are currently inactive.

In March, Janakantha, its Bangla

daily newspaper, suspended its print publication and online operations.

The Daily Star could not reach GJSP for comment. However, its former Chief Operating Officer Afizur Rahman said the institution has many liabilities.

“It has around 350 to 400 creditors. All properties are mortgaged. It has not been paying income tax for a long time. There are bank loans. Overall, it is difficult to survive in the current situation,” said Afizur, who resigned last year.

State-run Janata Bank is currently struggling with high defaulted loans of Beximco, S Alam, Thermex Group and Anontex Group.

At the end of last year, its total outstanding loans stood at Tk 97,934 crore, 74 percent of which are classified as bad loans.

Under the Artha Rin Adalat Act, efforts to recover defaulted loans are first made through auction, said Md Mazibur Rahman, managing director of Janata Bank.

“However, this does not always receive a good response. In some

cases, responses are received for smaller loans. If recovery is not possible this way, cases have to be filed in accordance with the law.”

Following the fall of the previous Awami League-led government, cases have been filed against many borrowers. Besides, efforts are ongoing to recover loans through other means. Last year, the bank recovered Tk 900 crore.

Woman

FROM PAGE 12
helpline on 999, after which police responded and rescued his wife.

The woman, a 27-year-old mother of one, told police that she was taken to a field and raped by two men.

Chandina Police Station Officer-in-Charge (OC) Atikur Rahman said five individuals were allegedly involved in the incident. Among them, two allegedly raped her while the others assisted. Police detained four suspects from the scene, while another remains at large.

The victim filed the case with Chandina Police Station at 1:30pm yesterday.



DISABILITY-INCLUSIVE BUDGET 2026–27

Addressing Inflation and Economic Challenges

A roundtable titled “Disability-Inclusive Budget 2026–27: Addressing Inflation and Economic Challenges” was held on April 21, 2026, at The Daily Star Centre in Dhaka. The event was jointly organised by Access Bangladesh Foundation, Women with Disability Development Foundation (WDDF), and The Daily Star. This roundtable brought together policymakers, experts, persons with disabilities, and key stakeholders to discuss disproportionate barriers faced by persons with disabilities, including limited access to essential services and increased living costs, amid rising inflation, and to highlight inclusive budget priorities for the upcoming national budget that would address the needs and rights of persons with disabilities properly.



ASHRAFUN NAHAR MISTI
Executive Director
Women with Disabilities Development Foundation (WDDF)

Disagreements remain over the actual number of persons with disabilities in Bangladesh, making it difficult to understand their living conditions fully. However, it is evident that many face barriers in education, healthcare, employment, transport, and justice, largely due to gaps in inclusive budgeting. While existing support often focuses on allowances and loans, there is a need to move toward ministry-based inclusive budgets that ensure equal rights and opportunities. In particular, women with disabilities experience layered challenges shaped by social attitudes and limited access to services. For example, only 0.13% participate in vocational training, and just around 1 percent of girls with disabilities attend primary school, with participation declining further at higher levels. At the same time, persons with disabilities face about 13% higher living costs, with women often bearing even greater expenses. Therefore, increasing accessibility, ensuring targeted allocations across ministries, and expanding support within local government budgets are essential for meaningful inclusion.



ALBERT MOLLAH
Co-Founder & Executive Director
Access Bangladesh Foundation

Bangladesh currently runs 95 social security programmes, with only seven focused on persons with disabilities, and just two provide direct individual benefits. Although 35.31 lakh people receive support, including 1 lakh students, the overall allocation remains limited, only 0.52% of the national budget. The monthly allowances remain at Tk 900, significantly lower than the support in the neighbouring countries. At the same time, major gaps exist in disability data, which affects effective planning and resource allocation. Evidence also shows that households with persons with disabilities face 13% higher costs, increasing poverty from 23% to 34%. Despite progress through the National Social Security Strategy,



for visually impaired students, continue to create barriers. However, affordable solutions exist, including providing assistive devices across universities with modest budget allocations. Therefore, a phased and planned approach is needed, starting with accessibility, reducing dropout rates, and expanding support systems. Furthermore, curriculum reform based on universal design and updated teaching methods is essential to ensure truly inclusive education.



MD. SHOHELE RANA
Head of Program
Access Bangladesh Foundation

Participation of persons with disabilities in vocational training remains extremely low, despite the presence of over 100 government technical training centres and around 50 polytechnic institutes. This is largely linked to education gaps, as 55% have no formal schooling and 81% do not meet entry-level requirements, with participation among women with disabilities as low as 0.13%. In addition, barriers such as inaccessible infrastructure, lack of ramps and wash facilities, inaccessible information, absence of sign language interpreters, and limited inclusive teaching pedagogy further restrict access. Although policies and targets exist, including a 5% quota and plans to increase enrolment, progress depends on practical measures. Budget priorities should include accessibility audits, infrastructure upgrades, inclusive curriculum design, relaxed entry requirements, provision for assistive technologies, financial and need-based appropriate adjustment support to ensure meaningful participation in skills development.



ANIKA RAHMAN LIPY
Assistant Director
Centre for Disability in Development (CDD)

Employment for persons with disabilities depends on both employer readiness and employee preparation. However, without clear incentives or state support, employers often lack motivation to hire. At the same time, job retention remains a major challenge due to short-term contracts and the absence of job security, where persons with disabilities are more vulnerable to discrimination during layoffs. Therefore, non-discrimination policies and proper monitoring mechanisms within organisations are essential. Also, a broader approach is needed beyond allowances, including skill development and workplace accessibility. To address this, government support should encourage private sector engagement through incentives and structured collaboration, especially with Chambers of Commerce under a public-private partnership framework. Furthermore, national guidelines and budget allocation are necessary to create inclusive and accessible workplaces, ensuring both recruitment and long-term retention of persons with disabilities.



SALMA MAHBUB
Executive Director & General Secretary
Bangladesh Society for the Change and Advocacy Nexus (B-SCAN)

A shift from a charity-based mindset to a rights-based approach is necessary to ensure meaningful budget allocation and inclusion. Despite existing building codes and policies, implementation gaps persist, resulting in inaccessible schools, transport, and housing. So, proper enforcement of accessibility standards and greater public awareness are critical. Budget consultations with persons with disabilities should be reinstated and strengthened. Duty waivers on assistive devices, accessible

buses, and lifts, along with tax benefits for housing. Furthermore, comprehensive planning and budget allocation are needed to ensure accessibility, independence, and full civic participation for persons with disabilities.



NASRIN JAHAN
Executive Director
Disabled Child Foundation

The seven social safety programmes that are related to persons with disabilities mainly operate through disability allowances and education stipends. However, concerns remain that education stipends are often unutilised, as many students with disabilities are not effectively reaching or remaining in the education system. This indicates deeper barriers that need further examination. Currently, about 39 lakh persons with disabilities are identified under the government's allowance system, where a uniform Tk 900 monthly payment is provided regardless of severity. However, this amount is not aligned with inflation and does not reflect different levels of need. At the same time, with an estimated 10 to 15% of the population living with disabilities, continued reliance on a charity-based approach is insufficient. To address these, reforms are needed to introduce need-based, multi-layered support, ensure inflation-adjusted benefits, and allow combined safety net access. Additionally, a dedicated institutional structure is essential for continuous policy focus, coordination, and year-round implementation.



MOHUA PAUL
Co-Founder & Chairperson
Access Bangladesh Foundation

Health services for persons with disabilities remain inadequate in general hospitals, largely due to limited capacity and lack of specialised support. Since disabilities are diverse, a one-size-fits-all approach is not effective; instead, rehabilitation requires a multidisciplinary team involving doctors, physiotherapists, occupational and speech therapists, counsellors, and peer support. Such coordinated care can significantly improve independence, education, and employment outcomes. Mental health support is also critical, as many individuals lack access to basic treatment due to poverty, cost, and low awareness, despite needing simple medication and community care. In addition, many service centres face accessibility gaps, limited therapy services, and weak infrastructure. Hence, priorities should include expanding multidisciplinary teams, improving accessibility, increasing staffing and funding, introducing health insurance, and ensuring stronger participation and monitoring by disability organisations for better service delivery.



DEWAN MAHFUZ E MAULA
Advocacy and Communication Manager
CBM Global, Bangladesh

Disability-related expenses are not only financial but also directly linked to inclusion, mobility, and participation. At present, families with persons with disabilities face an additional 13% cost due to disability, including expenses for assistive devices, services, maintenance, and accessible transportation. However, current tax policies largely follow a uniform approach, which may overlook the principle of equity and equal participation. While some measures exist, such as an increased personal income tax threshold of Tk 4.75 lakh, a rebate of over Tk 50,000 for families with children with disabilities, and a 5% tax benefit for inclusive employment, these remain limited in scope. In addition, the

absence of clear VAT exemptions on assistive devices keeps them costly and less accessible. Greater attention is needed to reduce VAT and taxes on assistive devices and the raw materials required for their local production. Clear guidelines on priority assistive products, possibly aligned with the WHO's list of 50 items, would also be beneficial. Furthermore, coordinated policy action, improved rural access, and the creation of dedicated support mechanisms can ensure that accessibility and participation are strengthened for all, without added financial burden.



ANAMIKA PANDAY
Facilitator
Community Development Association (CDA)

Entrepreneurship development, grants, low-interest loans, and incubation support are essential for economic growth, job creation, and social inclusion, especially for persons with disabilities and women. However, several barriers limit access. Complex procedures, excessive paperwork, and strict collateral requirements make financial support difficult to obtain. Simultaneously, lack of information and limited outreach prevent many from accessing available opportunities, particularly in rural areas. Incubation support, covering guidance from business planning to market access and sustainability, remains insufficient at the grassroots level. Therefore, simplifying and digitising application processes, ensuring collateral-free or easy-term loans, and establishing help desks at district and upazila levels can improve access. Expanding incubation centres, along with quota-based grants, training, and market linkages, can strengthen participation and contribute to building a more inclusive economy.



MD. ABDULLAH
Society of the Deaf and Sign Language Users (SDSL)

Accessibility remains a key barrier for persons with hearing impairments in the IT sector, largely due to the high cost of assistive devices and the limited availability of inclusive digital platforms. For example, the absence of sign language integration in online services creates challenges in accessing information. Also, advanced tools such as text-to-sign or sign-to-text applications are still unavailable locally. High VAT and taxes on imported devices, including hearing aids and quality batteries, further restrict access. Although policies and commitments exist, practical implementation remains limited. As a solution, making assistive devices tax-free or subsidised, and ensuring budget allocation for accessible digital information, can significantly improve inclusion, and stronger, coordinated support across sectors can help build a more inclusive and accessible system.



MD. SAIDUL HUQ
Executive Director
Blind Education and Rehabilitation Organization (BERDO)

The central demand is full inclusion of persons with disabilities in all sectors, including education, employment, politics, and the economy, as this is essential for overall development. However, disability issues are often overlooked in planning processes, limiting progress. Media can help highlight these realities and accelerate change. The education system for persons with disabilities remains weak, with shortages of teachers, poor infrastructure, and limited oversight. Although the Rights and Protection of Persons with Disabilities Act exists, adequate budget allocation for its implementation is necessary. With growing awareness and readiness, coordinated efforts across sectors can increase inclusion and ensure

meaningful progress.



SHARMIN AKTHER DOLON
Program Associate
Women with Disabilities Development Foundation (WDDF)

According to the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics data, more than half of the persons with disabilities are women. However, their employment remains extremely low, possibly below 1%. Linking these women to both jobs and entrepreneurship is essential for economic inclusion. To address this, several practical steps can be considered. Low interest or interest-free loans and startup grants can support business creation, while training in business management, accounting, and online marketing can build capacity. At the same time, tax exemptions for a certain period and improved market access, including dedicated stalls or fairs, can encourage growth. Furthermore, accessible technology, help desks, and awareness campaigns can strengthen participation. Giving priority in government procurement can also create sustainable opportunities and enhance their contribution to the economy.



DR. MOHAMMED MONIRUZZAMAN KHAN
Director
Institute of Disaster Management and Vulnerability Studies University of Dhaka

Empowerment comes from personal resources, involvement in decision-making, and economic participation. Although policies and laws show inclusion, gaps remain in effective implementation. Moreover, social and cultural mindsets continue to limit women's full participation, especially when ownership of land and access to finance are restricted. As a result, empowerment remains uneven despite existing frameworks. A truly inclusive People's Budget must ensure access and entitlement for all, including women, persons with disabilities, and other marginalised groups. With economic inclusion comes decision-making power. Education is also important; however, without financial access and market participation, capability cannot fully develop. Therefore, prioritising entitlement can drive meaningful and sustainable inclusion.



SHAHEEN ANAM
Executive Director
Manusher Jonno Foundation

Challenges faced by persons with disabilities are structural, institutional, and social, and so require a shift in mindset to truly accept diversity. While laws and policies exist, effective implementation depends on changing attitudes within families, society, and state institutions. Moreover, the lack of accurate national data continues to hinder proper planning and allocation. Capacity gaps also persist, as many individuals are unaware of their entitlements or lack the skills to access them. However, progress is visible through grassroots efforts, including the formation of hundreds of disabled people's organisations and ongoing advocacy. Therefore, clearer and more specific budget recommendations are essential. Increased allocation, improved accessibility, and inclusive infrastructure can ensure dignity, independence, and meaningful participation, while continued advocacy can gradually drive positive change.



TANJIM FERDOUS
Head of Strategic Partnerships
The Daily Star (Moderator of the Session)

Notable progress has been achieved in Bangladesh through legal and policy frameworks aimed at protecting the rights of persons with disabilities. However, the main challenge lies in translating these commitments into effective implementation with real impact. Amid rising inflation and living costs, persons with disabilities face greater hardship due to employment barriers, limited services, and higher out-of-pocket expenses. This roundtable aimed to reflect on the current challenges as well as contribute to practical proposals for the upcoming national budget to ensure equity, accessibility, and dignity.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Introduce caregiver allowances and increase budgets for persons with disabilities using needs-based, inflation-adjusted frameworks.
- Shift from allowance-based support to comprehensive social protection systems.
- Decentralise planning to enable inclusive local service delivery.
- Strengthen inclusive education through accessible infrastructure, trained teachers, and assistive technology.
- Expand vocational training and employment with accessible systems and employer incentives.
- Adopt ministry-wise inclusive budgeting with clear targets and accountability.
- Fund and involve organisations of persons with disabilities in budgeting processes.
- Ensure and enforce funding for accessibility across infrastructure and services.
- Develop lifecycle-based, multi-layered support systems.
- Reduce taxes on assistive devices and provide incentives for inclusive employers.

which promotes a rights-based and life-cycle approach, challenges persist due to centralised budgeting, limited participation, and a lack of need-based support. The upcoming budget should prioritise accurate data, increase allocations, decentralise planning across ministries, and introduce innovative, needs-based support to ensure inclusive and equitable social protection.



LITON BARURI
Movement Liaison
Action on Disability and Development (ADD)

Bangladesh has strong laws on inclusive education, yet implementation remains limited. Although compulsory primary education requires every child to be included, many children with disabilities are still left behind, especially at the primary level, where dropouts begin. While initiatives like PEDP introduced accessibility measures, such as ramps, poor maintenance, and weak coordination between departments have reduced their effectiveness. Additionally, inaccessible wash facilities and inadequate support in higher education, such as assistive technology



PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED

AFRIDI AND CO GET INTO TEST MODE

Pakistan pacer Shaheen Shah Afridi goes through fielding drills at the Mirpur Academy Ground yesterday, following the arrival of the first batch of the Test squad on Sunday. Their first of two Tests against Bangladesh will get underway at the Sher-e-Bangla National Cricket Stadium on Friday.

Leopards upset Abahani on rain-hit opening day

SPORTS REPORTER



Overnight rain and bad light dominated the opening day of the Dhaka Premier League (DPL), with five of six matches disrupted and delayed starts across multiple venues yesterday.

The biggest upset came as newly-promoted Dhaka Leopards beat defending champions Abahani by five wickets. Abahani made 181 for 8 in 30 overs, but Zakir Hasan's 74 guided Leopards to a statement win at Bashundhara Sports City.

Prime Bank defeated Agrani Bank by four wickets at BKSP-4, with Tanzid Tamim striking a quick 44 off 32 balls. At Cricketers Academy, Legends of Rupganj posted 283 for 3 in 34 overs, powered by Ashikur Rahman's unbeaten 99 and Shak Mahedi's 49 off 16 balls, leading to a 22-run win over Rupganj Tigers.

Gazi Group crushed Brothers Union by nine wickets after bowling them out for 82 at ULAB. Meanwhile, Mohammedan beat City Club by five wickets at BKSP-3, thanks to Anamul Haque's 80. In the only full-overs match, Bashundhara Strikers defeated Gulshan Cricket Club by 26 runs, led by Saif Hassan's 96.

Most games started after 11:30am due to unsafe run-ups, drizzle and poor light, especially at Bashundhara Sports City.

Ad hoc committee president Tamim Iqbal acknowledged that such issues would have to be accepted for now. "If we wanted to start perfectly, we wouldn't be able to organise matches outside of the two venues," Tamim said on Monday.

BCB approves formation of EC

SPORTS REPORTER

The Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB), led by its ad hoc committee under Tamim Iqbal, has initiated the process for the next board elections by approving the formation of a three-member Election Commission.

According to a BCB press release issued on Monday, one member of the commission will be nominated from either the Ministry of Youth and Sports or the National Sports Council (NSC), while the remaining two members will be appointed by the board.

The board also announced that a notice inviting nominations of councillors from all categories, including Category 1, will be issued shortly in accordance with Article 12.7 of the BCB constitution.

The previous board, led by Aminul Islam, had formed Regional Cricket Associations in several divisions before its tenure ended on April 7 amid allegations of irregularities during the October 6 elections last year.

The BCB has now decided to dissolve the ad hoc committees of the Regional Cricket Associations in Chattogram, Sylhet and Barishal with immediate effect.



Inter Milan players and coaching staff celebrate their 21st 'scudetto' following their 3-0 Serie A win against Parma at San Siro on Sunday. Marcus Thuram's side-footed finish just before half-time set Inter on their way before Henrikh Mkhitaryan's second-half goal put the Scudetto beyond doubt. With three matches left, Inter have a 12-point lead over reigning champions Napoli and 15 more points than third-placed AC Milan. Cristian Chivu's side can complete the third league and cup double in their history if they beat Lazio in the Coppa Italia final on May 13 in Rome.

PHOTO: AFP

Rana's rise gathers pace with 'presence of mind'

ABDULLAH AL MEHIDI

Nahid Rana's stars are rising as he continues to push his pace threshold. The six-foot-five fast bowler, wiry and full of fire, carried that surge into the Pakistan Super League (PSL) yesterday, helping Peshawar Zalmi clinch the title while impressing a legend of the game, Wasim Akram.

Rana took little time to make his presence felt at Lahore's Gaddafi Stadium, dismissing Hyderabad Kingsmen's Glenn Maxwell with the first delivery of his second over, a short ball targeting the body of the explosive batter. The veteran Australian could only manage a mistimed pull, resulting in an easy catch at mid-on. Later, a rapid yorker saw the Bangladesh pace sensation dismantle Hunain Shah's stumps.

In particular, it was the mixing and matching of lengths that Wasim talked about. "I have been following his performances recently," the former Pakistan captain said on commentary. "He has good short deliveries and a very good bouncer, so he bowled those length deliveries to push the batter onto the back foot and then slipped in the fuller delivery."

The fuller delivery, like the short ones, created surprise, with some deliveries striking the bat rather than the bat meeting it. "He showed that he has good presence of mind, which is important. He has a bright



future ahead of him," Wasim added.

Rana finished with figures of two for 22, setting the stage for a comfortable five-wicket win as Hyderabad were bundled out for 129. "I was able to do what the team expected of me, and that's the biggest thing for me," Rana told The Daily Star yesterday, adding that he is "ready for the Pakistan Test series" fitness-wise.

Barring a few players involved in the PSL final, Pakistan began their practice sessions at the Mirpur Academy Ground yesterday. Interestingly, just four days ahead of the first Test, the pitch wore a viper green colour. Although the grass

will be trimmed before the match, a team management source indicated there would still be assistance for fast bowlers, similar to the recent ODIs against Pakistan.

On the back of 15 ODI wickets against Pakistan and New Zealand of late, featuring a five-wicket haul in each series, and nine wickets overall in the PSL, Rana will be licking his lips at the prospect of pace-friendly conditions.

However, his control of length has been the key. In the second ODI against New Zealand in the hostile Dhaka heat, he bowled 33 per cent short deliveries and 27 per cent on a good length. Team management sources claimed they were astounded by the accuracy of line and length.

"Tests and T20s are different propositions. I will try to stay within my process and do what I have been doing in Tests," Rana said upon returning to Dhaka yesterday.

Peshawar's Australian recruit Aaron Hardie had talked about Rana's 151 kph deliveries being a disaster for batters and even joked that captain Babar Azam would not relish facing him in the nets ahead of Pakistan's tour of Bangladesh.

"I know he has got Test cricket in a week, and Babar is not looking forward to facing him. There's a friendly rivalry there," Aaron had said.

With improved accuracy and growing tactical nous, Rana's hostility is only set to heighten.

Semifinal on a knife-edge as Arsenal host Atletico

AGENCIES

Arsenal and Atletico Madrid meet at the Emirates with their Champions League semifinal finely balanced at 1-1, setting up a decisive night with a place in the Budapest final at stake. Both sides arrive in strong form: Arsenal's 3-0 win over Fulham boosted their domestic title push, while Atletico eased past Valencia 2-0, allowing key players to rest. Bukayo Saka's timely return has revitalised Mikel Arteta's attack, adding sharpness and creativity just when it matters most. The Gunners, chasing a rare league and European double, are eyeing only their second Champions League final. Atletico, led by Diego Simeone, will rely on resilience and big-game experience, with Julian Alvarez under particular focus amid transfer speculation.

➔ Arsenal have lost only one of their last 15 UEFA home matches against Spanish clubs (W9 D5), winning their last three without conceding, including a 4-0 victory over Atlético Madrid.

➔ The Gunners have won five and lost four of their nine previous Champions League two-legged ties against Spanish opposition. This is their second semi-final against a La Liga side, having previously beaten Villarreal 1-0 on aggregate in 2005–06.

➔ Arsenal remain the only unbeaten team in this season's Champions League (W10 D3), matching their longest unbeaten European run from March 2005 to April 2006.

➔ Atletico have won just two of their last 13 UEFA matches against English sides (D3 L8), and have lost their last four UEFA away games against Premier League opposition.

➔ However, Atlético have an excellent semi-final record, winning all three of their previous UEFA semi-final ties against English teams, and six of their last seven UEFA semi-final ties overall.



A goalkeeping benchmark

In World Cups, Gordon Banks conceded just four goals while saving 33 of the 37 shots he faced. Since the 1966 FIFA World Cup (earlier reliable data is unavailable), he holds the highest save percentage – 89.19% – among goalkeepers who have faced at least 30 shots.

Visit The Daily Star's website to also read: "The tears of a crownless king"

SINNER GALLOPS FROM ONE RECORD TO ANOTHER

➔ Jannik Sinner claimed the Madrid Masters title in dominant fashion on Sunday, defeating Alexander Zverev 6-1, 6-2 in just 57 minutes.

➔ The Italian became the first player to win five consecutive Masters 1000 titles, adding Madrid to victories in Paris, Indian Wells, Miami and Monte Carlo.

➔ The 24-year-old is now one title away from completing the 'Golden Masters' -- winning all nine Masters 1000 events -- with Rome the only missing piece.

➔ On a 23-match winning streak, the Italian heads to Rome. If he wins in Rome, he will join Novak Djokovic as the only men to achieve the feat.

"I'll never be able to compare myself to Rafa, Novak and Roger, what they've achieved is incredible – over 10 or 15 years. I'm trying to make my own mark, but I'm doing it for myself, I don't play for the records, I'm just putting myself in a position to succeed."

—Jannik Sinner after his Madrid success



Eastern Bank PLC.

HEAD OFFICE, 100 GULSHAN AVENUE, DHAKA-1212

Tender Notice

Eastern Bank PLC. (EBL) invites sealed bids from eligible, experienced, and competent bidders for the following services/items:

Lot 1: Storage (2nd call) | Lot 2: Servers (2nd call)

Interested bidders are requested to collect the RFP document electronically by sending an email from their official email address to bidit@ebi-bd.com mentioning the name of the company and the authorized contact person, mailing address, telephone and mobile phone numbers on or before **Thursday, 7 May 2026**.

Queries are to be mailed by **Thursday, 14 May 2026**.

Bids should be prepared in accordance with the instructions contained in the RFP document and submitted as per the process described therein, bearing official authorized personnel's seal and signature in two separate sealed envelopes clearly marked 'Technical Offer' (hardcopy and softcopy both) and 'Financial Offer' (hardcopy only) on the envelopes.

Bids should be dropped in the Tender Box, addressed to the Office of the President, Purchase Committee, Head Office, Eastern Bank PLC., 100 Gulshan Avenue, Dhaka-1212 (Basement-1, Tender Box) on or before **Thursday, 4 June 2026**.

Tenderers are allowed to bid for all lots or any lot separately. However, common documents need not be submitted for multiple lots, a single submission covering one lot is sufficient.



Tears flow as Limon comes home

Slain PhD student buried in Jamalpur

SAHIDUL ISLAM NIRAB, Jamalpur

Zahurul Haque stood shattered when the body of his son Zamil Ahamed Limon arrived from the US at his ancestral home in Jamalpur's Madarganj upazila yesterday afternoon, 18 days after his murder.

"My son never gave anyone any trouble. How could someone torture him so cruelly?" In a trembling voice, Limon's father spoke of grief no parent should have to bear.

The home that once echoed with joys of laughter was now filled with unimaginable sorrow. Many could hardly believe that the young man, whom they had so much hope for, had returned home in a coffin.

Limon was one of two Bangladeshi PhD students brutally murdered in Florida last month.

SEE PAGE 8 COL 4



PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON

Zahurul Haque, father of PhD student Zamil Ahamed Limon, who was brutally murdered in the US, leans on his other son, Zubair, as he breaks down during a press briefing near HSIA in Dhaka, following the arrival of Limon's remains yesterday.

HC stops GCC waste project in Bhawal National Park

MONJURUL HAQUE, Gazipur

The High Court yesterday imposed an injunction against the construction of a waste disposal facility and ordered the authorities to refrain from dumping waste in and around Bhawal National Park and its adjoining protected forest areas.

The Gazipur City Corporation (GCC) is constructing a waste dumping facility, known as a Secondary Transfer Station (STS), inside the protected forest area after demolishing part of the national park's boundary wall.

Established in 1982, the park is on around 5,022.29 hectares in the city's Rajendrapur area. The park, home to a wide variety of wildlife, regularly attracts tourists and researchers from across the country.

SEE PAGE 8 COL 1

Govt plans buffer stocks to curb price shocks

DC CONFERENCE

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government is working to build at least two months of "strategic reserves" of import-dependent commodities to shield the market from local syndicates and global price volatility.

After the fourth session on day two of the DC Conference at the Osmani Memorial Auditorium yesterday, several deputy commissioners said they talked about price control and made some suggestions.

The DCs yesterday had seven sessions with 24 ministries and divisions, during which relevant ministers, state ministers, and advisers were present.

A deputy commissioner from Rangpur division said controlling the market through mobile court drives during a crisis was difficult and that ensuring sufficient stocks would help a lot.

The DCs also suggested increasing the number of importers so that the trade of

"The government would provide three months of financial and food assistance to nearly 1 lakh families affected by heavy rain and flash floods in the haor regions."

— Asadul Habib Dulu
Minister for disaster management and relief.

essential goods is not restricted to a few traders.

In response, Commerce Minister Khandaker Abdul Muktedir said a strategic reserve for import-dependent goods is being established. "This will help prevent domestic shortages and stabilise prices even if global supply is disrupted."

SEE PAGE 5 COL 4

Janata to auction Globe Janakantha assets

MD MEHEDI HASAN

State-owned Janata Bank has issued an auction notice to sell the assets of Globe Janakantha, including the 15-storey Janakantha Bhaban in the capital, as it seeks to recover Tk 215 crore in defaulted loans.

Interested bidders have been asked to submit applications along with a pay order or bank draft of 10 percent of the reserve price by 2:00pm on April 28 at the court office.

The reserve price will be announced at the auction and bidding increments will follow court rules. The bank or court will not be liable for any disputes arising after the sale.

SEE PAGE 8 COL 4

Chhatra Dal faces flak from its grassroots

Protesting leaders allege bias in member selections

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Chhatra Dal, the student wing of the ruling BNP, is facing growing resentment from its grassroots after announcing committees for 45 units, with "deprived" leaders and activists staging protests in at least five districts and accusing the central leadership of ignoring long-serving organisers.

The backlash has created a fresh organisational challenge for the Bangladesh Nationalist Party's affiliated organisations as it tries to expand and strengthen its field-level activities, insiders said.

On Saturday night, 45 committees -- for university, medical college, district and metropolitan units -- were announced, including 22 new partial committees and 23 full committees.



Chhatra Dal activists clash in Rangamati.

Following the announcement, grassroots leaders and activists staged protests, demanding the reconstitution of the committees.

The protests have already spread to Rangamati, Noakhali, Kishoreganj, Dinajpur and the capital's Nayapaltan area, where demonstrators alleged that active, long-serving organisers were ignored while inactive, married, elderly and non-student individuals were included.

Chhatra Dal General Secretary Nasir Uddin Nasir said, "When we give posts to two persons and give other posts to the rest, many people often feel disappointed and resentful. For now, we are taking these things as quite normal."

"We believe they will accept the organisation's decision. If they remain patient and follow the organisation's rules, a situation and environment will be created for them to become leaders in the future."

He said the committees were formed after considering all factors and that the allegations against them were baseless.

Chhatra Dal insiders said the grassroots discontent has become a major test for the central leadership at a time when the organisation is trying to revive educational

SEE PAGE 8 COL 1



PHOTO: REUTERS

Mourners react during the funeral of a Palestinian man, who was killed by Israeli gunfire on Sunday, in Gaza City, yesterday. More than 800 Palestinians have been killed since a ceasefire took effect in October, 2025.

Woman abducted, raped

Four suspects held

OUR CORRESPONDENT,
Cumilla

Police yesterday arrested four men in connection with the alleged rape of a woman in Chandina upazila of Cumilla.

The arrestees have been identified as Md Ashik, 31; Mehedi Hasan Tarek, 24; Md Arif, 34; and Md Ismail, 37 -- all residents of Kamarkhola village under Majikhar union. According to police, citing the case statement, the incident took place around 1:10am yesterday in Kamarkhola village, while the woman and her husband were on their way to a relative's house.

According to the case statement, the victim and her husband -- residents of Barura upazila -- had set out around 11:00pm last night on a battery-run auto-rickshaw for Madarpur village in Chandina. Around 12:00am, when the vehicle reached Kamarkhola village adjacent to Madarpur, it ran out of charge. The couple then continued on foot.

At that time, three youths arrived on a motorcycle and intercepted them. The victim's husband alleged that the men behaved aggressively and later called two more individuals. He said several of them forcibly took away his wife to a nearby maize field, while one of them led him away and left him at a distance in the dark.

The husband said he immediately called the national emergency

SEE PAGE 8 COL 6

অনলাইন আর্থিক প্রতারণা সম্পর্কে সতর্কীকরণ বিজ্ঞপ্তি

সম্প্রতি পরিলক্ষিত হচ্ছে যে, কতিপয় গ্রাহক হ্যাকিং এর মাধ্যমে অনলাইন ব্যাংকিং-এর ক্ষেত্রে আর্থিক প্রতারণার শিকার হচ্ছেন। অনলাইনে আর্থিক প্রতারণা রোধকল্পে নিম্নলিখিত বিষয়াদি কঠোরভাবে পরিপালন করার জন্য অনুরোধ করা হলো:

- কখনোই আপনার ব্যাংক অ্যাকাউন্ট নং, মোবাইল ব্যাংকিং পিন, পাসওয়ার্ড বা ওটিপি কার্ড সাথে শেয়ার করবেন না।
- সন্দেহজনক লিংকে ক্লিক, লিংক থেকে কোনো ফ্রি অ্যাপস ইন্সটল করা এবং অনলাইন জুয়া থেকে বিরত থাকুন।
- সামাজিক যোগাযোগ মাধ্যমে বাংলাদেশ ব্যাংক, বিশ্ব ব্যাংক, আইএমএফ, এশিয়ান ডেভেলপমেন্ট ব্যাংকসহ বিভিন্ন ধরনের লাইসেন্সবিহীন অনলাইন অ্যাপস থেকে জামানতবিহীন অনলাইন ঋণ/বিনিয়োগ বা অপরিচিত ব্যক্তির সাথে আর্থিক লেনদেন সংক্রান্ত প্রস্তাব গ্রহণ করবেন না।
- কোনো প্রলোভনমূলক অফার (লটারি, পুরস্কার ইত্যাদি) পেলে তা যাচাই ছাড়া বিশ্বাস করবেন না।
- প্রয়োজনীয় ক্ষেত্রে সংশ্লিষ্ট ব্যাংক, ফাইন্যান্স কোম্পানি কর্তৃপক্ষ অথবা নিকটস্থ থানায় যোগাযোগ করুন।

মোবাইল অ্যাপস/অনলাইন ব্যাংকিং ব্যবহারে অধিক সতর্ক থাকুন। অনলাইনে আর্থিক প্রতারণার ফাঁদ হতে নিজেকে নিরাপদ রাখুন ও অন্যদের সতর্ক করুন- আপনার কষ্টার্জিত অর্থ সুরক্ষিত রাখুন।

'সচেতনতার ছোট পদক্ষেপ বড় নিরাপত্তার নিশ্চিত রূপ'

ব্যাংকিং ও আর্থিক সেবা পেতে হয়রানির শিকার হলে কিংবা কোনো অভিযোগ থাকলে ফোন করুন- ১৬২৩৬ নম্বরে।

জনস্বার্থেঃ কাস্টমার ইন্টারেস্ট প্রটেকশন সেন্টার (সিআইপিএস) টেকনোলজি রিস্ক এন্ড ডিজিটাল ব্যাংকিং সুপারভিশন ডিপার্টমেন্ট

বাংলাদেশ ব্যাংক

UNBOWED

On the occasion of **WORLD PRESS FREEDOM DAY**, The Daily Star will continue its exhibition till **MAY 15 (11:00AM TO 8:00PM)** at its Dhaka office on Kazi Nazrul Islam Avenue.

The exhibition documents the brutal attack on its Dhaka office on December 18, 2025. We invite you to walk through these scarred spaces and bear witness to what was endured.

The Daily Star CELEBRATING 35 YEARS of Journalism without fear or favour

BEYOND THE FUEL PUMP

According to various reports, the government has already mandated that 30% of its own fleet must transition to electric power by the end of the decade. This top-down approach is designed to signal confidence to the private sector and individual buyers that the era of fossil-fuel dominance is nearing its sunset.

TAGABUN TAHARIM TITUN

For many residents in Dhaka, the morning commute has become an exercise in economic endurance. As global geopolitical tensions, particularly the volatility surrounding the Iran-US war, continue to rattle energy markets, the ripples are felt directly at local refueling stations. As of April 2026, the government adjusted fuel prices again, pushing octane and petrol rates to historic highs. While the average Dhaka commuter watches the digital digits on the fuel pump climb past 130 Taka per liter, a new breed of drivers is bypassing the queue entirely. For them, the fuel of the future comes from a wall socket at a fraction of the cost. This is how this shift is portraying the luxury of survival in an era of unpredictable energy costs.

GLOBAL VOLATILITY HITS LOCAL PUMPS

The recent surge in fuel prices is not merely a local phenomenon but a reflection of a fragile global supply chain. With octane prices hovering around BDT 125 to BDT 130 per litre, the cost of operating an internal combustion engine (ICE) vehicle has reached a breaking point for the middle class. Recognising this vulnerability, the Bangladesh government under the draft National Electric Vehicle (EV) Policy 2025, led by the Ministry of Industries, has proposed an ambitious roadmap: ensuring 30% of all vehicles on the road are

electric by 2030.

This policy shift is driven by a need for energy security and environmental commitments. According to various reports, the government has already mandated that 30% of its own fleet must transition to electric power by the end of the decade. This top-down approach is designed to signal confidence to the private sector and individual buyers that the era of fossil-fuel dominance is nearing its sunset.

THE GROWING ELECTRIC FLEET

Electric Vehicles (EVs) are slowly moving away from becoming a rare sight on Dhaka's roads. What began as a niche market for high-end enthusiasts is now expanding into a competitive arena. Premium brands like Audi, with its e-tron series, and BMW, with the iX, were early entrants that established the luxury EV segment. Meanwhile, brands like Hyundai and MG have introduced more accessible crossovers, catering

to a broader demographic.

The entry of BYD, the world's largest New Energy Vehicle manufacturer, has further intensified this landscape in the country. Unlike traditional brands, BYD's approach focuses on the "maturity curve" of the market. Imtiaz Nawsher, CMO of B Y D

Bangladesh, observes that the country is in an early adoption phase but is progressing quickly.

He notes, "Bangladesh represents a unique convergence of urban density and rising fuel costs. It is a market that is ready to leapfrog, not gradually transition, from internal combustion to electrified mobility."

SEE PAGE S2



ILLUSTRATION: ZARIF FAIAZ



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BYD SEAL 5 

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ELECTRIC BIKE EVOLUTION

ELECTRIC BIKE EVOLUTION			
YEAR OR ERA	KEY EVENT	DESCRIPTION	
1890s	First Patents	Early e-bike designs began with Ogden Bolton Jr.'s rear hub motor (1895) and Hosea W. Libbey's mid-drive concept.	
Early 1900s	Gasoline Wins	Gasoline engines outperformed early e-bikes due to lower costs and easier refueling.	
1940s	WWII Utility	Wartime gasoline shortages led to the creation of Belgium's Socovel e-bike.	
1970s	Oil Crisis Interest	High oil prices sparked innovations like Mike Corbin's City Bike and a 165 mph speed record.	
1991	Battery Breakthrough	Lithium-ion batteries solved e-bike weight and bulk issues.	
1993–1995	Modern Systems	Yamaha and Panasonic developed "Pedelects" and Peugeot launched an electric scooter.	
2009	Modern E-Moto Era	Mass-produced electric motorcycles like the Zero S and Brammo Enertia entered the market.	
2020	The "Bike Boom"	The pandemic sparked a surge in e-bike popularity for safer commuting.	
Today	Mass Adoption	Modern e-bikes feature smart technology, lightweight frames, and ranges exceeding 60 miles.	

MARZIA BHUIYA TABENDA

Early beginnings (late 1800s – early 1900s)

Electric bicycles and motorcycles go back to the late 19th century. One of the earliest known designs came in 1895 by Ogden Bolton Jr.. His idea used a battery-powered motor placed in the rear wheel (hub motor). It did not even have pedals, which shows that early designs were more like motorcycles than bicycles.

In 1897, Hosea W. Libbey introduced the concept of two motors placed near the crank. This is similar to what we now call a mid-drive system. These two ideas—hub motors and mid-drive motors—are still the main systems used today.

During this time, electric vehicles were actually seen as a strong option. But battery technology was very weak. Lead-acid batteries were heavy, slow, and had very limited range. Because of this, electric bikes could not compete for long.

Decline during petrol dominance (1900s – 1970s)

As petrol engines improved, electric bikes and motorcycles quickly fell behind. Petrol bikes were faster, could travel longer distances, and could be refuelled quickly. This made them more practical.

Electric bikes did not disappear completely, but they stayed in very limited use. They were sometimes used during fuel shortages or for short-distance travel. However, they were not widely adopted because batteries were too heavy, the range was very low, and speed was limited.

For many decades, electric two-wheelers remained a small and almost forgotten part of the transport industry.

Revival attempts and early improvements (1970s – 1980s)

The oil crisis in the 1970s brought attention back to electric vehicles. People started looking for alternatives to petrol. Some companies and engineers began experimenting again with electric bikes. Around this time better battery types like nickel-cadmium were introduced. Japanese companies like Panasonic and Sanyo started working on electric bicycles.

However, even with these improvements, electric bikes were

KEY TRENDS TODAY

» Better battery range and faster charging

» Smart features like GPS and mobile connectivity

» Growth in urban mobility solutions

still not practical for most users. They were expensive and still had limited performance.

Lithium-ion and pedelec system (1990s – 2000s)

A big breakthrough came in the 1990s with the development of lithium-ion batteries. These batteries were lighter, more powerful, and lasted longer. This made electric bikes much more practical.

During this time, the pedelec (pedal electric cycle) became popular. In this system, the motor helps only when the rider pedals. Companies like Yamaha and Panasonic played a big role in developing this technology. For example, Peugeot Scoot'Elec

(mid-1990s), Early electric bikes with better speed and features like regenerative braking

Even then, adoption was still slow because Prices were high and charging systems were not widely available

Modern electric bike industry begins (2009 – 2019)

The real modern phase of electric motorcycles started around 2009. New companies focused only on electric vehicles. Zero Motorcycles produced high-performance electric bikes Battery technology improved quickly during this period. Electric motorcycles became faster and more reliable.

A major moment came in 2019 with the launch of the Harley-Davidson LiveWire. This showed that even traditional motorcycle companies were moving toward electric. At the same time, companies like Energica Motor Company pushed performance further, especially in racing.

Recent growth and current trends (2020 – present)

Electric bikes have grown very fast in recent years. The COVID-19 pandemic also increased demand, as people looked for safer and cheaper ways to travel. Today, electric two-wheelers include , E-bikes for daily commuting , Electric scooters for city use, High-performance electric motorcycles. example -Energica Ego+ – very powerful, high-speed electric motorcycle, Kawasaki Ninja e-1 – designed for everyday city riding

The market is expected to keep growing strongly. For example, Europe is projected to sell around 10 million e-bikes per year by 2030.

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ELECTRIC MOBILITY

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THE EV ECONOMY

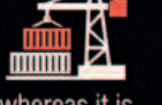




Octane cars cost BDT 15–20 per km, while EVs run at BDT 1.5–2.5



EV import duty stands at 89 %



whereas it is more than 127% for ICE



Electrification Goals

State has targeted 30 % vehicle electrification by 2030

Over 500 EVs already registered by BRTA



Challenges

No fiscal support for importing electric vehicles



Scarcity of public stations forces home charging

Beyond the fuel pump

FROM PAGE S1

BRIDGING THE CHARGING DIVIDE

Despite the growing interest, a significant policy gap remains. While the government promotes EV adoption, the physical infrastructure is lagging. Currently, there are very few public fast-charging stations across the country. Most EV owners are forced to rely on home charging, which limits long-distance travel and restricts ownership to those with dedicated parking and electrical provisions.

Furthermore, the duty structure remains a point of contention. While fossil-fuel SUVs face massive taxes, the total tax incidence for

EVs still stands at around 89%. Industry experts argue that for the 30% target to be realistic, the government needs to provide clearer incentives for private charging entrepreneurs and further reduce import duties for entry-level electric cars. Without a unified policy on charging standards and grid management, the transition may remain confined to urban centers.

A FUTURE BEYOND FUEL

As seen in the recent European markets, where EV sales often surge following petrol price hikes, Bangladesh is at a similar crossroads. This time the transition greatly being economically

resilient rather than just green. The entry of global leaders like BYD and Mercedes-Benz provides the technological depth needed to build trust, but the government must close the infrastructure gap to turn the 2030 vision into a reality.

The silence of an electric motor on a congested Dhaka street is more than just a lack of noise. It is a signal of a country moving toward energy independence. For the Bangladeshi driver, the choice is becoming clear: continue watching the rising digits at the pump or plug into the future. The road ahead is long, yet the silent engines suggest the journey has already begun.



ELECTRIC AVENUE

The Daily Star

DHAKA TUESDAY MAY 5, 2026
BAISHAKH 22, 1433 BS

S3

SUPPLEMENT



ILLUSTRATION: ZARIF FAIAZ

EV DEBATE

Numbers behind the noise

RAHBAR AL HAQ

The argument around electric vehicles tends to collapse into something overly simple: clean versus dirty, future versus past. In Bangladesh, the conversation around EVs is heating up. Transport contributes about 15% of national CO₂ emissions, and Dhaka remains one of the most polluted cities globally. The numbers tell a more complicated story.

HOW THE EXTRACTION DIFFERS Lithium mining, which underpins modern EV batteries, is resource-intensive and linked to water stress and land disruption. According to the International Energy Agency, the

roughly \$31 billion, lead added \$59 billion, and the market is projected to exceed \$139 billion by 2030.

EMISSIONS

Here, the gap becomes clearer, though not absolute. Data from the International Council on Clean Transportation (ICCT) shows a mid-size gasoline car producing about 35.5 metric tons of CO₂ over 150,000 km, with diesel at roughly 33 tons and hybrids at 26.7 tons. A standard EV, running on a typical grid, lands around 17.5 tons, dropping to 11.5 tons when powered by renewable energy. Additionally, EV production emits 8.0 tons CO₂ versus 5.5 tons for combustion cars, typically offset after about 20,000 km.

charging through networks like CrackPlatoon costs about 18.97 taka per kWh. A typical gasoline car in Dhaka traffic averages around 10–12 km per litre, which translates to roughly 11 to 14 taka per kilometre in fuel cost alone. On the other hand, most EVs consume around 0.15 to 0.20 kWh per kilometre, depending on size and driving conditions. That results in an energy cost of approximately 2.8 to 3.8 taka per kilometre.

Even under inefficient conditions, an EV costs less than one-third as much per kilometre to run compared to a petrol vehicle. The difference becomes more pronounced in Dhaka's stop-start

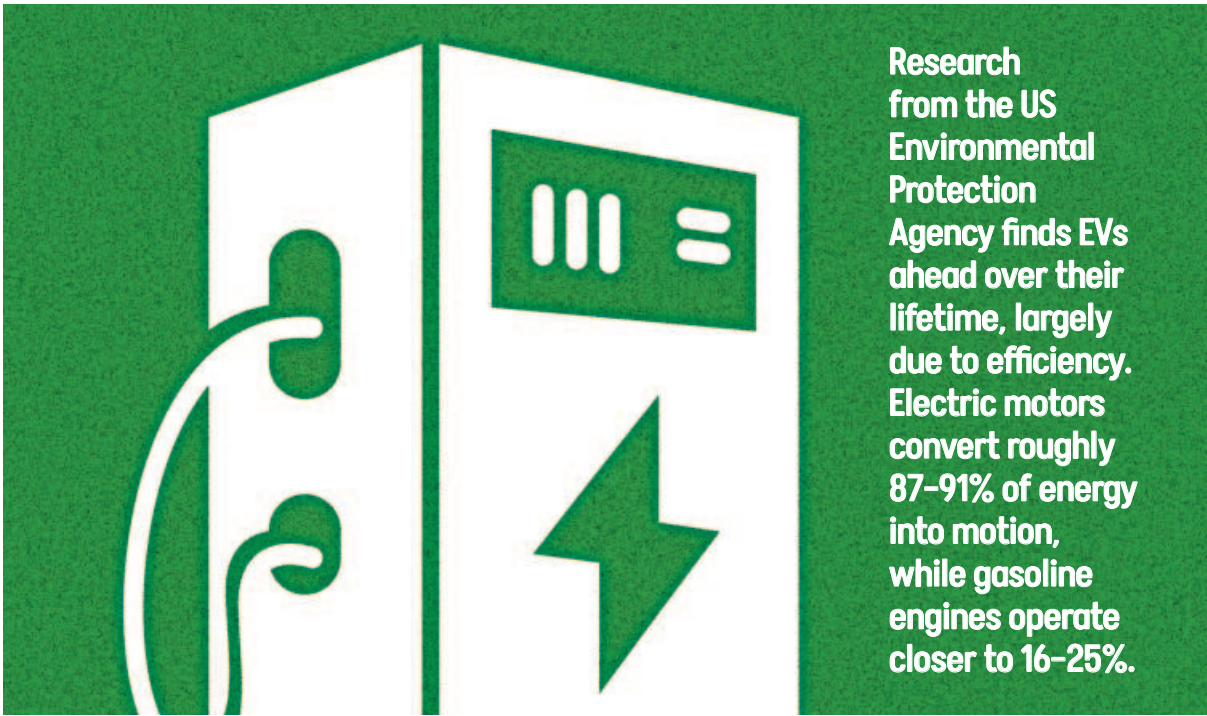


ILLUSTRATION: ZARIF FAIAZ

environmental cost is measurable, particularly in arid regions. Oil extraction, meanwhile, comes with its own well-documented issues—spills, methane leakage, and long-term ecosystem damage. As such, the difference is structural. Oil has to be extracted and burned continuously. Battery materials are mined once and, at least in theory, can be recovered and reused.

BATTERY LIFESPAN AND DISPOSAL

Most modern EV batteries are designed to last between 8 and 15 years, with gradual degradation rather than sudden failure. Recycling systems are developing worldwide, with lithium, cobalt, and nickel recovery already underway. Some markets are scaling this effort quickly. By 2024, China had 156 licensed lithium-ion recyclers with an annual capacity of 423.3 million tons, alongside 71 lead-acid recyclers handling 1.47 billion tons per year. Lithium battery recycling generated

THE KEY VARIABLE

In Bangladesh, the grid still leans heavily on fossil fuels, which narrows the environmental advantage of EVs. Even so, research from the US Environmental Protection Agency finds EVs ahead over their lifetime, largely due to efficiency. Electric motors convert roughly 87–91% of energy into motion, while gasoline engines operate closer to 16–25%. Local conditions complicate the picture further. Congestion can increase fuel consumption by up to 40%, a scenario where electric drivetrains operate more efficiently.

That said, EVs are not clean in an absolute sense. Tire and brake wear still produce particulate matter, including PM10 and PM2.5. Because EVs tend to be heavier, they can generate more tyre dust. Regenerative braking helps cut brake dust, but non-exhaust emissions remain part of the equation.

THE ECONOMIC ARGUMENT

Fuel costs in Bangladesh now hover around 140 taka per litre, while

traffic, where combustion engines waste fuel idling, while EVs consume almost no energy when stationary.

THE BOTTOM LINE

Charging infrastructure is limited, though expanding. CrackPlatoon operates 37 stations nationwide and plans to reach 100, but for now, range anxiety remains a factor, even as global EV ranges stretch to 400–500 kilometres per charge. Furthermore, import duties on EVs stand at a staggering 89.32%, among the highest globally. Registration fees are no better: 171,000 taka for an EV compared to just 25,000 taka for a small petrol car.

The final picture is neither clean nor dirty. EVs offer lower lifetime emissions and significantly lower running costs, but they are not a complete fix. Their impact depends less on the vehicles themselves and more on how electricity is produced, how infrastructure develops, and how policy evolves.

BYD setting the pace for the EV revolution

As rising fuel costs and environmental concerns the country which traditionally relied on internal combustion engines, is weaving dreams into a greener future with its young, tech-savvy population. In this interview, Imtiaz Nawsher, Chief Marketing Officer of BYD Bangladesh, discusses the brand's strategy to lead this transition.

The Daily Star (TDS): What made Bangladesh a priority market at this stage of your global expansion?

Imtiaz Nawsher (IN): Bangladesh represents a unique convergence of urban density, rising fuel costs, and increasing environmental awareness. All these make the case for new energy mobility particularly compelling in the country. It's a market that is ready to jump from petrol engines to modern electric power. With a young population, a rising population with higher disposable income, and strong government interest in sustainability, we see Bangladesh as a high-potential, future-forward market.

TDS: SUVs and crossovers dominate local demand. How has this influenced your product strategy in Bangladesh?

IN: Due to road conditions, family usage, and perceived versatility, consumers here prefer SUVs and crossovers. Our portfolio strategy reflects that reality. Models like the Atto 3, Sealion 5, and 6 are designed specifically as per Bangladeshi demands.

TDS: Charging infrastructure remains limited. How is BYD addressing this gap?

IN: We're approaching this with a multi-layered strategy. First, enabling home charging as the primary solution. Second, we are actively expanding charging accessibility by setting up BYD charging points in collaboration with our partners. And third, ensuring our vehicles are optimised for efficient energy use, reducing dependency on frequent charging.

TDS: How do your cars stay efficient in Dhaka's heat and traffic?

IN: Our vehicles are engineered for real-world conditions. Advanced thermal management systems ensure battery stability in high temperatures, while regenerative braking and intelligent energy management improve efficiency in stop-and-go traffic. We consistently test our vehicles in real Bangladesh road conditions through initiatives like the Sealion 6 1000KM drive and Endurance Drive.

TDS: How do you stand out from new competitors, and do you see their arrival as a challenge?

IN: We see increased competition as a positive sign. It builds market awareness and strengthens the infrastructure, which ultimately speeds up EV adoption across Bangladesh. Many new brands are entering the market inspired by the momentum we've built. We are even seeing other players shift their strategies toward PHEVs following the success of our Sealion 6. This shows that the market is maturing in real time, and we are proud to be leading that change.

Interview conducted by Tagabun Taharim Titun



IMTIAZ NAWSHER

Chief Marketing Officer

BYD Bangladesh

At BYD, our focus remains on leading through technology, trust, and a superior ownership experience, backed by strong product storytelling and impactful marketing that has helped build this category locally.



AI-Enabled Sustainable Efficiency for Smarter Retail

Shwapno improves distribution channel efficiency, optimizes route planning, and enables smarter distribution through AI-driven operations.

FUEL EFFICIENCY



Shwapno saves up to **6,000 liters** of diesel every month.



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Smarter Distribution with AI



Reliable Deliveries, Happier Communities



Owning EV: How easy is EV maintenance in Bangladesh?

PHOTO: ARFIN KAZI

FARHAN MUSFIQUE

Electric vehicles (EVs) are no longer a futuristic concept in Bangladesh. From electric motorcycles and scooters to a growing number of private electric cars, more consumers are becoming interested in lower fuel costs and environmentally friendly transport. However, for many prospective buyers, one question remains: how difficult is EV maintenance in Bangladesh?

On paper, EVs are easier to maintain than conventional petrol or diesel vehicles. They have fewer moving parts, no engine oil, no spark plugs, and no complex transmission systems. This means owners do not need frequent oil changes or many of the routine servicing requirements associated with internal combustion engine vehicles. For electric motorcycle users in cities such as Dhaka and Chattogram, this often translates into lower regular maintenance costs.

Yet the Bangladeshi reality presents a more complicated picture. Even though you don't have to be an "Electrical Engineering Graduate" to maintain an electric vehicle, the country still lacks a mature EV service ecosystem. While authorised dealerships for brands such as BYD, MG, Deepal and other newer entrants provide after-sales servicing, independent workshops with trained EV technicians remain limited. Outside major cities, finding mechanics who understand battery systems, software diagnostics or electric drivetrains can be difficult.

Battery health remains the biggest concern for many owners. Lithium-ion batteries typically last several years, but replacement costs can be significant. Bangladesh's hot climate, poor road conditions and inconsistent charging habits may also affect long-term battery performance. Some owners report concerns about limited availability of genuine replacement parts, particularly for imported electric

vehicles.

Charging infrastructure is another indirect maintenance challenge. Home charging is often the most practical option, but voltage fluctuations and unstable electricity supply in certain areas can create problems for charging equipment. Without proper electrical setups, owners may face avoidable repair expenses.

Despite these barriers, the situation is gradually improving. More dealerships are investing in technician training, and government discussions surrounding cleaner transportation may encourage better infrastructure in the future. For owners of electric scooters and motorcycles, maintenance is already relatively manageable due to simpler designs and lower costs. For now, maintaining an EV in Bangladesh is somewhat in the middle. It is easier than maintaining a traditional car in some ways, but harder in others due to limited infrastructure.

MERCEDES-BENZ

crafting a new era of high-end electric travel

While the global automotive industry shifts gears, the Bangladeshi luxury market is carving its own path toward electrification. Transitioning a legacy of internal combustion into a silent, digital future requires more than just new cars—it demands a robust framework of trust and infrastructure. In this interview, Imran Zaman Khan, Divisional Director of Rancon Motors Ltd. | Mercedes-Benz Bangladesh, explores the brand's roadmap for leading the nation's premium electric movement.

The Daily Star (TDS): With models like the EQ series and G580 now in the lineup, how is Mercedes shaping its long-term electric future in Bangladesh?

Imran Zaman Khan (IZK): Mercedes-Benz is redefining luxury mobility in Bangladesh with the country's largest premium EV lineup, including the all-electric G-Class. Our customer-centric approach builds a complete ecosystem through investments in charging infrastructure and digital solutions. To ensure a worry-free experience, every EV comes with an 8-10 year warranty and two complimentary home chargers with installation, establishing a sustainable foundation for the future of high-end electric driving.

TDS: Your earlier EV lineup was discontinued. What did Mercedes learn from that phase, and how is it shaping the current strategy?

IZK: key learning was that EV adoption depends on a complete ecosystem rather than just product availability. Our current strategy is far more comprehensive—combining a strong portfolio with robust infrastructure and long-term assurance. This integrated approach allows us to reintroduce EVs with greater confidence and ownership convenience.

TDS: As a super-premium brand, how does Mercedes balance exclusivity, luxury, and innovation while building an EV identity that feels distinct from its petrol and hybrid models?

IZK: Electrification is the evolution of modern luxury. Our EVs deliver silent performance, instant acceleration, and advanced digital intelligence while maintaining premium craftsmanship. Their futuristic design language sets them apart from petrol models, making the transition to electric both aspirational and practical for our clients.

TDS: With your own charging stations now in place in the country, how swiftly does Mercedes plan to scale its EV infrastructure in Bangladesh?

IZK: Infrastructure is our cornerstone. In partnership with CrackPlatoon, we have already established 32 charging stations nationwide. We also introduced the ChargeEasy app for seamless digital payments and access. Our goal is to scale rapidly across highways and urban hubs to facilitate long-distance travel and build a reliable nationwide network.

Interview conducted by Tagabun Taharim Titun



IMRAN ZAMAN KHAN

Divisional Director -
Rancon Motors Ltd.
| Mercedes-Benz
Bangladesh

We are setting the benchmark with 32 nationwide charging stations and 10-year warranties, ensuring a worry-free transition to premium electric mobility for every customer in Bangladesh

RANCON
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