



“Anyone who threatens the State of Israel will die because of his actions.”

Israeli PM Benjamin Netanyahu as hope rises for a US-Iran deal

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Haor farmers sink into debt, misery

SUKANTA HALDER, JAYDUL ISLAM and DWOHA CHOWDHURY

Untimely rains, floods, and upstream water inflow have left thousands of Boro farmers in the haor belt reeling from crop losses and plunging paddy prices.

Many have been pushed into a cycle of debt they fear they cannot escape, compounded by worries over how to feed their families through the year.

According to the agriculture ministry, over 2.36 lakh farmers across seven haor districts have been affected. The districts are Sylhet, Sunamganj, Brahmanbaria, Habiganj, Moulvibazar, Netrokona, and Kishoreganj.

Boro, the dry-season irrigated rice crop planted from December to February and harvested from April to June, contributes almost 55 percent of Bangladesh's annual rice output.

“Harvest is completed by the end of season every year. But this time, the damage occurred due to embankment failures and unusually heavy rainfall in April,” Md Salim Khan, additional secretary of the ministry's extension wing, told The Daily Star.

Boro paddy on 49,073 hectares, or 11 percent of haor cropland, were destroyed, while 17.5 percent of the fields remains at risk, he said.



Rain and storm on Wednesday afternoon flattened ripe Boro paddy in several villages of Poba upazila, Rajshahi, leaving farmers unable to harvest amid a labour shortage. They said the crops were due to be harvested within days, but the weather halted work. Yesterday, a woman in Darusha showed how the paddy lay damaged in the field.

PHOTO: AZAHAR UDDIN

Act fast to help haor farmers

PM asks officials



STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Prime Minister Tarique Rahman yesterday directed authorities to take urgent measures to support farmers hit by heavy rainfall in the haor region.

He issued the directives at a meeting at the Secretariat's Cabinet Division office. The meeting was held to review financial aid for affected

SEE PAGE 2 COL 4

AT A GLANCE

- Boro paddy on 49,073 hectares, or 11% of haor cropland, destroyed
- Cultivated on 4.55 lakh hectares
- Boro loss amounts to 2.13 lakh tonnes
- Loss estimated in terms of money: Tk 1,047cr
- Number of affected farmers: 236,000

SOURCE: DAE

In the seven haor districts, Boro was cultivated on 4.55 lakh hectares, with 80 percent harvested so far, according to Department of Agricultural Extension (DAE) data.

Officials said unofficial estimates suggest that in terms of money, the damage is Tk 1,047 crore.

Government officials said lists of affected farmers are being prepared, with emergency support expected to begin within days and continue for three months.

Nationally, acreage rose 3.29 percent year-on-year to 50.50 lakh hectares in FY2025-26, with production targeted at 2.24 crore tonnes. Production increased from 2.01 crore tonnes in FY22 to 2.13 crore tonnes

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

US awaits Iran's response on peace deal offer

AFP, Tehran

The United States was waiting yesterday for Iran to respond to its latest proposed deal to end the war in the Middle East and to reopen the key shipping lane out of the Gulf.

Oil prices tumbled five percent after US President Donald Trump said once again that an agreement could be near after positive talks and Iran said it would pass on its latest position to mediator Pakistan.

However, late yesterday, Iran's foreign ministry spokesperson said Tehran has not yet reached a conclusion on the proposal, and no response has been given to the US.

Any agreement to prolong the ceasefire between the United States and Iran could also

lower tensions in Lebanon, where an already fragile truce was under renewed strain after an Israeli strike on southern Beirut killed a Hezbollah commander.

The war, launched by the United States and Israel in late February, has seen Iran respond with attacks across the Middle East and impose a chokehold on the Strait of Hormuz, the gateway to the Gulf oil and gas industries and a strategic trade route.

Trump had this week briefly launched a naval operation to escort commercial vessels and force open the strait, only to stand it down within hours, citing progress on negotiations with Iran, which have been mediated by Pakistan and supported by Washington's Gulf

SEE PAGE 2 COL 5

12 more die from measles, symptoms

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Twelve more children died from measles and measles-like symptoms in the 24 hours till 8:00am yesterday, taking the total number of confirmed and suspected measles deaths to 336.

DEATH TOLL NOW 336

Of the 12, one tested positive for measles while the rest were suspected cases, according to the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS).

With the one death, the number of confirmed measles deaths rose to 57.

The death was reported from Dhaka division, according to the DGHS.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 4

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9-yr-old boy dies after air pumped into his rectum

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Narsingdi

A nine-year-old boy died after compressed air was reportedly pumped through his rectum using a tyre inflator machine at an auto-rickshaw garage in Narsingdi's Palash upazila yesterday.



The deceased, Ramim Mia, was the son of Ripon Mia of Gajaria Charkarardi village in the upazila, said Shahed Al Mamun, officer-in-charge of Palash Police Station.

The incident took place around 9:00am at a battery-run auto-rickshaw garage in Gajaria Bazar, he said, quoting family members and locals.

According to the family, Ramim had gone to the market to visit his grandfather, Amzad Hossain, who is a corrugated sheet trader there. The child's father also has a sanitary goods shop in the market, the OC said.

At one point, Ramim went to a nearby auto-rickshaw garage owned

SEE PAGE 8 COL 6



People stand outside a hospital morgue where a post-mortem is being performed on Chandranath Rath, an aide of BJP leader Suwendu Adhikari, who was shot dead on Wednesday, in Kolkata yesterday.

PHOTO: REUTERS

Special drives against extortionists and 'godfathers' ongoing

Says home minister

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Home Minister Salahuddin Ahmed yesterday said the government has taken a policy decision to gradually withdraw the army from field-level law enforcement duties, as discipline has been restored in the police force.

He made the remark while speaking to journalists at the Secretariat after a meeting on stone quarry management.

He said discipline has been restored in the police force since the elected political government assumed office.

Responding to questions, he said a special drive against extortionists and local "godfathers" is ongoing, adding that no one is above the law. He said drug traffickers, criminals and armed offenders are being arrested and punished through courts.

On Sylhet stone and sand quarry issues, the minister said a high-level expert committee has been formed to consider the limited reopening of quarry sites in Sylhet and Sunamganj while ensuring environmental protection and compliance with existing laws and regulations.

He said ecologically critical areas such as Jafong will remain outside the leasing scope. The committee is expected to submit its report by the end of the month, with a final decision in the first week of June. Steps will also be taken to expedite related court cases, he added.



'TRAFFICKING' TO RUSSIA UK slaps sanctions on Bangladeshi travel agency

UNB, Dhaka

The United Kingdom has announced a fresh round of sanctions targeting Russia's drone production network and groups, including a Bangladeshi travel agency, accused of exploiting vulnerable migrants to support Moscow's war in Ukraine.

The new measures, published on May 5, target 35 individuals and organisations, including those linked to human trafficking operations and companies supplying components for Russia's military drone industry.

Bangladesh's Dream Home Travels and Tours Ltd is among the organisations facing sanctions.

The Daily Star made several attempts to contact the agency but could not reach officials over the phone.

The British High Commission in Dhaka said the sanctions relating to Bangladesh target the travel agency for allegedly deceiving and exploiting Bangladeshis to fight in Russia's war in Ukraine.

As part of the sanctions package, the UK is intensifying efforts to disrupt Russia's military supply chains and networks accused of trafficking foreign migrants into the war effort.

The sanctions specifically target individuals involved in recruiting and transporting vulnerable migrants to fight on the frontlines in Ukraine on behalf of Russia, as well as firms supporting Russian drone factories.

British officials said the move reflects the UK's continued commitment to increasing economic pressure on the Kremlin and supporting Ukraine in pursuit of a "just and lasting peace".

SEE PAGE 8 COL 1

Israeli strike kills top Hamas official's son in Gaza: hospital, Hamas

AFP, Gaza City

A Gaza hospital and Hamas yesterday said the son of the Palestinian Islamist movement's chief negotiator had died from wounds sustained in an Israeli strike a day earlier.

Azzam Khalil al-Hayya, 23, the son of top Hamas official Khalil al-Hayya, "was martyred after succumbing to wounds sustained in an Israeli airstrike targeting him yesterday," Gaza City's Al Shifa hospital said in a statement.

The city's Al-Ahli hospital and a security source said on Wednesday that a strike on the Al-Daraj neighbourhood of Gaza City in the evening killed one person and wounded 10 others, including Azzam Khalil al-Hayya.

The Israeli military did not immediately respond to AFP's request for comment on the incident.

Azzam Khalil al-Hayya is the fourth of Khalil al-Hayya's seven sons to be killed in Israeli attacks, according to a Hamas source. Two of those were killed before the Gaza war erupted in October 2023.

The third, Hammam, was killed in an Israeli strike targeting Hamas leaders in Doha in September, which killed six people.

Khalil al-Hayya is the head of Hamas in Gaza despite living in exile in Qatar. He is currently vying for the leadership of the movement.

He survived the strike on Doha. In a statement, Hamas said that the killing of Azzam Khalil al-Hayya "came within the framework of attempts to exert pressure on the resistance leadership and its negotiating delegation, after the occupation's failure to impose its conditions or achieve its declared objectives."

West Bengal assembly

FROM PAGE 12

several days. These comments must be seen in the context of the core issue of the repatriation of illegal Bangladeshis from India. This obviously requires cooperation from Bangladesh. Over 2,860 cases of nationality verification are pending with Bangladesh, and several of them have been pending for over five years...

"We expect Bangladesh to expedite nationality verification so that the repatriation of illegal immigrants can take place smoothly," he said.

The MEA spokesperson added the repatriation of "illegal Bangladeshis" would require cooperation from Dhaka.

The issue of alleged infiltration by

Bangladeshis was among the BJP's key poll planks in West Bengal.

The saffron party had vowed to stop so-called infiltration by ensuring fencing along the India-Bangladesh border. It had also promised to identify "illegal Bangladeshis" in the state and deport them.

India stepped up its drive against alleged undocumented Bangladeshis last year and sent hundreds towards the Bangladesh border, especially through Assam, Tripura and Meghalaya. Delhi said these were illegal migrants being deported, while Bangladesh raised serious concerns over "push ins" without proper verification or formal repatriation procedures.

Haor farmers sink into debt, misery

FROM PAGE 1

DEBT AND DESPAIR

For this report, The Daily Star interviewed over 40 farmers in the seven haor districts. More than 25 of them revealed that the ongoing situation has trapped them in a cycle of debt.

Bidhan Sarkar of Muladair Haor in Khaliajuri upazila, Netrokona, said his five acres of ripe paddy were submerged.

"In our haor area, we get only one crop a year. We depend on selling that paddy to cover all yearly family expenses, including children's education and medical treatment," he said.

Standing waist-deep in water, he managed to harvest part of the crop and hired labourers for the rest, but was forced to sell wet paddy at Tk 600 per maund (37.3kg), far below production cost, just to pay them.

He had borrowed Tk 40,000 for cultivation. "Now the paddy is not even enough for food. The moneylender is pressuring me to sell my land. I see no option but to sell it," he said.

Fultu Mia of Madan upazila borrowed Tk 2 lakh, with repayment due at Tk 2.60 lakh. "Now I cannot repay that debt by selling the paddy. Even if I return the principal amount, the remaining Tk 60,000 will still remain as debt," he said.

Shamim Mia of Barhatta upazila leased two acres, borrowing Tk 50,000 with interest, promising to repay Tk 70,000 after harvest.

But 40 percent of his paddy field has gone underwater.

"I am struggling to harvest the

remaining crop. The paddy was very good, and I thought I would get around 100 maunds of rice as my share. Even after repaying the lender, I could have supported my family for four to five months," he said.

"Now, even if I sell the remaining paddy, I won't be able to repay the loan. I will have to borrow again," he added.

Amirul Islam, deputy director of DAE in Netrokona, said heavy rainfall affected nearly 80,000 farmers in the district.

Syed Ahmed of Dekhar Haor in Sunamganj cultivated 1.2 hectares by leasing half of the land. He expected over 100 maunds of paddy but salvaged only 50.

Half of the crops from the leased land must go to the landowner.

"I need at least 70 maunds of paddy to feed my family for a year. Moreover, I must repay Tk 36,000 for a Tk 30,000 loan."

"With one daughter's marriage due this year, the crisis has become unbearable. Selling the paddy at Tk 700 per maund, I cannot even repay the loan and interest. I will have to take another loan next season," he said.

Akkas Mia of Mithamoin upazila, Kishoreganj, cultivated six hectares with Tk 6 lakh in loans, due to repay Tk 9 lakh including interest.

"So far, I have not been able to bring even a single kilogram of paddy home. My nights are sleepless now because of the stress of debt," he said.

In Kishoreganj, 13,479 hectares of paddy fields have gone under water, affecting 52,500 farmers.

Crop losses in the district are estimated at Tk 300 crore, said Md Sadiqur Rahman, deputy director of

the Kishoreganj DAE.

Suman Namshudra of Kawadighi Haor in Rajnagar upazila, Moulvibazar, took Tk 2 lakh in loans expecting 600 maunds of rice.

After the damage, he fears he may salvage only 50 maunds.

"I have not seen such a disaster in the last 15 years," he said. "Under pressure from moneylenders, it has now become difficult for me to stay at home."

3-MONTH SUPPORT

Prime Minister Tarique Rahman yesterday directed authorities to take urgent measures to assist the affected haor farmers.

During a meeting at the Secretariat, he instructed officials to prepare an accurate and transparent list by identifying those actually affected, the Prime Minister's Press Wing said in a statement.

Disaster Management and Relief Minister Asadul Habib Dulu had earlier announced that the aid would be provided as food assistance for three months through a special card system.

Economist Abdul Bayes, former vice-chancellor of Jahangirnagar University, cautioned that food aid alone would not resolve the crisis.

"The main concern is how farmers will repay cultivation-related loans after suffering crop losses," he said, stressing that debt relief must accompany food support.

He suggested measures such as rescheduling loans, installment-based repayment, or waiving interest to ease the burden.

[Mintu Deshwara and Tafsilul Aziz contributed to this report]

First-ever hawker policy in the works

DIPAN NANDY

The government has, for the first time, drawn up a guideline to regulate street vendors in the capital aimed at reclaiming footpaths and roadsides to ease pedestrian and traffic movement while also bringing discipline to the trade for the welfare of hawkers.

The City Corporation-1 Branch of the Local Government Division published the "Dhaka City Hawker Management Policy-2026" in a gazette notification on Wednesday. The document has been sent to Dhaka south and north city corporations, the Traffic Division of Dhaka Metropolitan Police, and RAJUK.

Under the policy, a nine-member Central Hawker Management Committee and seven-member regional committees will oversee implementation.

Hawkers must obtain licences from the central committee specifying location, business type, and stall size. Licences must be renewed annually, and the committee reserves the right to cancel registration for violations.

Only one licence will be permitted per family, and traders must operate solely at their allocated site. Spaces cannot be leased or rented, and vendors must carry their smart card or allocation document at all times.

Authorities will conduct area-based surveys to select sites, ensuring at least five to six feet of pedestrian space. Access roads will be prioritised, while arterial roads will be avoided. Thirty percent of spaces in each site will be reserved for women and persons with disabilities.

Hawkers will be barred from operating within 30-40 feet of intersections, bus stops, or metro stations. If an area is declared "hawker-free" in the public interest, that decision will take precedence. Authorities may take immediate action against illegal vendors or



No stalls within 30-40 feet of intersections, bus stops, or metro stations

Holiday markets (7am-5pm) and night markets (6pm-10pm) allowed at designated sites

Authorities can declare "hawker-free" zones and act against illegal vendors

cancel registrations for violations.

The policy allows "Holiday Markets" at designated sites from 7:00am to 5:00pm on weekly and government holidays.

Additionally, the policy introduces "Night Markets" from 6:00pm to 10:00pm. Designated

lanes that are crowded by day but deserted at night may be used for these markets, with areas such as Mirpur-10 Hope Market, Mirpur-1 intersection, Gulistan, Sadarghat, New Market, and the Baitul Mukarram area cited as examples. Markets are strictly prohibited on playgrounds, school fields, public spaces, places of worship, or graveyards.

While temporary umbrella coverings are allowed for protection from the elements, they must be removed daily after business hours, and no permanent structures are permitted.

Robiul Alam, deputy secretary of the City Corporation-1 Branch, told The Daily Star: "We have sent the policy to the two city corporations. Soon, they will jointly hold meetings to determine the implementation timeline and the cost of hawker licences."

He added that city corporations have already begun discussions with RAJUK on location selection.

The hawker issue has long plagued Dhaka, with vendors occupying footpaths and forcing pedestrians onto roads, heightening accident risks and worsening traffic congestion.

From April 1 to 5, the DMP and city corporations conducted joint drives to clear areas including Gulistan, New Market, Nilkhet, and Science Lab. While footpaths were temporarily freed, hawkers soon returned.

Meanwhile, under separate initiatives, DNCC has issued digital identity cards to 202 hawkers in Mirpur-10, Mirpur-1, and Mirpur-2, while DSCC has provided such cards to around 100 hawkers.

12 more die

FROM PAGE 1

The 11 others took the number of deaths from suspected measles cases to 279.

Among the 11, five were reported from Dhaka division, two from Rajshahi division, while one each from Khulna, Barisal, Sylhet and Mymensingh divisions.

During the same period, 286 new confirmed cases were reported, raising the total number of confirmed cases to 6,208.

Besides, the DGHS recorded 1,238 new suspected measles cases, bringing the total number of suspected cases to 45,498.

Act fast

FROM PAGE 1

farmers, according to the Prime Minister's Press Wing.

He instructed officials to prepare a transparent list of those impacted.

"An accurate and transparent list must be prepared by identifying the actual affected farmers. Based on this list, financial assistance will be provided to the farmers for the next three months," the statement quoted him as saying.

Disaster Management and Relief Minister Asadul Habib Dulu and Agriculture, Fisheries and Livestock Minister Aminur Rashid Yasin were present at the meeting.

Among the MPs from the region, Deputy Speaker Kayser Kamal, State Minister for Textiles and Jute Shariful Alam, Osman Faruk, Fazlur Rahman, Lutfozzaman Babar, Kamruzzaman Kamrul, Nurul Islam, Kalim Uddin Milon, and Mohammad Kayser Ahmad were present.

US awaits Iran's response

FROM PAGE 1

Arab allies.

Among oil traders and diplomats, there was optimism.

"We've had very good talks over the last 24 hours, and it's very possible that we'll make a deal," Trump said on Wednesday, adding his now habitual threat to return to bombing if Tehran refuses to back down to US demands.

Iran's foreign ministry spokesman Esmail Baghaei said Tehran would communicate its position to mediator Pakistan "after finalising its views".

But inside Iran, many were cynical about the talks.

According to a report from US network NBC News, Trump's U-turn came after Saudi Arabia – whose Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman reportedly talked directly to Trump – refused to allow US forces to use its airspace and bases for the Hormuz operation.

"Neither side in these negotiations is really capable of reaching an agreement," 42-year-old photographer Shervin told AFP reporters in Paris.

"This is another one of Trump's games; otherwise, why are so many warships and military forces being sent toward Iran?"

According to a report from US network NBC News, Trump's U-turn came after Saudi Arabia – whose Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman reportedly talked directly to Trump – refused to allow US forces to use its airspace and bases for the Hormuz operation.

US news outlet Axios, citing two officials, reported that both Tehran and Washington were close to an agreement on a one-page memorandum of understanding to end the war and set a framework for negotiations on Iran's nuclear programme.

Trump has claimed that Iran's leadership is divided, in the wake of the deaths of many senior figures in US and Israeli strikes.

But President Masoud Pezeshkian yesterday said he had met with the country's supreme leader Mojtaba Khamenei, who has not been seen in public since his appointment in early March.

"What struck me most during this meeting was the vision and the humble and sincere approach of the supreme leader of the Islamic revolution," Pezeshkian said, in a video broadcast by state television.

Khamenei, reportedly wounded in strikes on the first day of the Middle East war that claimed the life of his father and predecessor Ali Khamenei, has released only written statements since his appointment.

Oil prices fell again, tumbling by five percent Thursday – having fallen around 10 percent over the previous two days. International benchmark, Brent North Sea crude, shed 5.1 percent to \$96.06 a barrel. The main US contract, West Texas Intermediate, lost 5.5 percent to \$89.87.

Markets have been particularly concerned about the Strait of Hormuz, which in peacetime carries a fifth of the world's oil and LNG trade as well as a good chunk of its fertiliser.

Govt approves Bogura City Corporation

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government has approved the formation of Bogura City Corporation and five new upazilas in four districts.

The approval came at the 120th meeting of the National Implementation Committee on Administrative Reorganisation held at the Secretariat yesterday. Prime Minister Tarique Rahman chaired the meeting.

The five new upazilas are Mokamtala in Bogura, Matamuhuri in Cox's Bazar, Ruhea and Bhully in Thakurgaon, and Chandrogonj in Lakshmipur.

According to the decision, Shibganj upazila in Bogura will be divided to form Mokamtala upazila, while Chakaria upazila in Cox's Bazar will be split to create Matamuhuri upazila.

In Thakurgaon, Sadar upazila will be divided to form Ruhea and Bhully upazilas, while Lakshmipur Sadar upazila will also be divided to create Chandrogonj upazila.



Rods protrude from a temporarily sand-filled section of a road in the capital's Segunbagicha area following underground cable installation work by the Dhaka Power Distribution Company. The absence of proper safety measures poses risks to pedestrians, especially at night. The photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

Revitalise family planning, improve reproductive health

Experts urge govt

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Experts and officials yesterday called for reinvigorating the family planning programme to improve reproductive health services, reduce unintended pregnancies, and address the country's declining contraceptive coverage.

They said the programme, once hailed as a successful national intervention to reduce fertility and slow population growth, has remained stagnant for more than a decade, while services have recently been severely disrupted.

Two senior health officials, however, said the government is planning to restructure primary healthcare, with family planning forming a major part of the initiative.

The decline in primary healthcare services is creating multiple problems, including the recent measles outbreak. The family planning programme, another major component of primary healthcare, has remained stagnant for years and requires urgent intervention.

ABU JAMIL FAISEL, public health specialist

They made the remarks at a policy dialogue titled "Declining Primary Healthcare Programme in Bangladesh: The Story of National Family Planning Programme", organised by Bangladesh Health Watch at the CIRDP auditorium yesterday.

Yasmin H Ahmed, adviser to Bangladesh Health Watch, said the family planning programme helped reduce the total fertility rate (TFR) from 6.3 in 1975 to 2.3 in 2011. However, the latest data from 2025 showed the TFR had risen to 2.4.

She said the contraceptive prevalence rate (CPR) increased from 7.7 percent in 1975 to 64 percent in 2022, but later dropped to 58.2 percent in 2025.

The situation turned worse as the procurement of contraceptive methods has remained stalled for over two years, placing the entire system under immense strain, she said, urging the authority to revitalise the programme.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 6

Stop diverting education funds to other sectors

Demand speakers at dialogue

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers yesterday called for ensuring that education sector funds are not diverted to other sectors, alleging that money from the education budget had previously been allocated to projects such as the Rooppur Nuclear Power Plant and the Bangabandhu Satellite.

Speaking at a citizen dialogue in the capital, they also urged the government to stop assigning teachers duties unrelated to classroom instruction.

The dialogue, titled "Government Priorities and the Education Sector: Budget and Reality", was organised by the Citizen's Platform for SDGs, Bangladesh, at the Bangladesh-China Friendship Conference Center.

It was chaired by the platform's convener and CPD Fellow Dr Debapriya Bhattacharya.

State Minister for Primary and Mass Education Bobby Hajaj said no teacher would be allowed to enter classrooms without receiving proper training.

"We have already taken that step. Because of this decision, 14,500 teachers marched against me. But we remain firm in our position. They will complete their training and return to classrooms within the next four to six months," he said.

The state minister said 30 to 40 percent of government primary school buildings require urgent renovation, while some need complete reconstruction.

"School infrastructure does not only mean buildings; we want to align building design with the

teaching process," he said.

He added that the government is formulating a "similar standard curriculum" and preparing a sustainable action plan for the next three to five years, which will be made public within six months to a year.

He also said work is underway to bring Ebtedayi madrasahs under the Primary Education Board

DEMANDS

- Free teachers from non-teaching duties

- Ensure proper use of education budget

- Focus on quality of education, not just enrolment

- Increase investment in education sector

- Stop political interference in school committees

- Improve teacher training before posting

- Reform primary teacher salary structure

and formulate a "Teacher Policy" covering salary, promotion, and career development.

Debapriya said increasing budget allocations alone is not enough without ensuring proper utilisation and evaluation.

"To move development forward, the education sector must be viewed not as an area of expenditure, but as

an investment, where the primary goal will be to create skilled human resources," he said.

He said the focus should now shift from access to educational outcomes. "Students are enrolling in schools, but whether they are graduating with quality education is now the key issue."

Eminent economist Prof Anu Muhammad questioned why education budgets are often said to lack funds while "thousands of crores" are allocated elsewhere.

"Neighbouring countries spend more than five percent of their GDP on education and health. Why can't we?" he said.

An education commission was formed in 2010, but the government that formed it never implemented its recommendations, he added.

He also criticised the burden of ancillary work on teachers due to a lack of support staff in schools.

Rasheda K Chowdhury, executive director of Campaign for Popular Education, criticised the inclusion of unrelated projects in the education budget.

"Education is not considered a single sector. At first, it was linked with the Ministry of Religious Affairs. Then came the Bangabandhu Satellite. Then came Rooppur. These are all included in our education budget," she said.

She also warned against politicising school managing committees, saying she would return to court if political appointments continue despite a High Court ruling upheld by the Appellate Division.

SEE PAGE 10 COL 7

'Public interest must come first for journalists'

Dawn editor tells Star event

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Journalists should continue informing the public and serving public interest even when authorities dislike their reporting, said Zaffar Abbas, editor of Pakistani newspaper Dawn.

"Our values are very clear that if anything is against democratic values, we will oppose it. Whether it is a civilian government or a military government, if they go after rights activists, we will oppose it," he said while speaking at a programme titled "Journalists at a crossroads: Conversation with Zaffar Abbas", organised by The Daily Star at its office in Dhaka yesterday.

"If there is a clash between the government's version of national interest and our understanding of national interest, we will weigh the

Continue reporting on acts of violence, terrorism, and militancy, but make sure we do not glorify terrorism or militant groups. We must also avoid dehumanising those accused of extremism.



public interest and go for it," he said. Zaffar said journalists must remain confident that their goal is to defend free speech and inform people about what is wrong with society, the government and the authorities.

Speaking about Dawn's liberal values in Pakistan, often regarded as a conservative Islamic country, he described the country as having a "deeply religious society".

"When we talk about liberal values, we are not talking about anything against religion. It is about explaining what a civil society should be all about," he said, adding that he was not challenging any religious narrative.

He said Dawn had openly supported equal

SEE PAGE 10 COL 4

TIB seeks PM's backing for 2028 anti-graft summit

STAR REPORT

Transparency International Bangladesh Executive Director Dr Iftekharuzzaman met Prime Minister Tarique Rahman at the latter's office in the Secretariat yesterday.

Atikur Rahman Ruman, additional press secretary to the PM, said, "They discussed measures to free the country from corruption. The prime minister reiterated his government's firm stance against graft."

Speaking to reporters after the meeting, TIB chief Iftekharuzzaman said, "We have made some specific recommendations to the government on good governance and anti-corruption issues. The prime minister has taken the matters very positively and has assured us that these will be implemented."

"We have especially given advice on why reforms and restructuring of institutions like the Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) are necessary," he added.

Iftekharuzzaman said, "The government wants to send a message to the world that it is uncompromising in its fight against corruption. As part of this effort, TIB has proposed hosting the 2028 International Anti Corruption Conference

SEE PAGE 4 COL 8



Ensure workplace safety, protect labour rights

Demand speakers at discussion

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government should establish a mechanism to ensure safer working environments at multinational companies so that workers' rights are protected and companies are held accountable for negligence, speakers said at a programme yesterday.

They also stressed the need for labour-friendly policies, fair wages, skill development, and stronger protection for workers in both formal and informal sectors.

Rights activists, political leaders, and expatriates made the remarks at a discussion titled "Labour Environment, Evaluation, Rights, and the Future of Work", organised by The Bangladesh Dialogue (TBD) at The Daily Star Centre.

At the event, SM Saif Kader Rubab, director of TBD, said, "Tragedies such as the Rana Plaza collapse led to the introduction of labour laws, minimum wage structures, maternity leave, and labour courts. But the state must still play a more effective and ethical role to ensure workers' rights."

Presenting the keynote paper, TBD Chief Operations Officer Kazi Rakib Hossain said workers in Bangladesh are still deprived of fair wages, workplace safety, and basic labour rights, even 140 years after the beginning of the labour movement.

He said workers in the garment, transport, domestic work, and migrant labour sectors continue to face discrimination, insecurity, and workplace risks.

Kazi Rakib also said women, third-gender people,

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4



Nabo Anande Jaago: The Legacy of Thakurbari -- a cultural event marking the 165th birth anniversary of Rabindranath Tagore -- was held in the capital yesterday. The programme was organised by the Indira Gandhi Cultural Centre, in collaboration with the Fashion Design Council of Bangladesh. The event revisited Thakurbari as a cultural world of its own, with a special focus on the women of the Tagore household and their role in shaping the Renaissance in the Indian subcontinent.

PHOTO: COURTESY

Follow hajj regulations, avoid penalties

Govt urges pilgrims

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh's Ministry of Religious Affairs has urged citizens to strictly comply with Saudi Arabia's hajj regulations and avoid attempting to perform the pilgrimage without official permits.

This warning comes after Saudi Arabia introduced tougher penalties ahead of this year's Hajj to control overcrowding and improve pilgrim safety.

Under the new rules, individuals caught performing or attempting to perform hajj without a valid permit could face fines of up to SAR (Saudi riyals) 20,000 (approximately Tk 6.50 lakh).

According to a statement issued by the religious affairs ministry, the Saudi Ministry of Interior also warned of strict action against those facilitating unauthorised pilgrims, including transport providers, accommodation owners, travel agencies and

SEE PAGE 4 COL 6

Prof Israfil appointed first VC of Thakurgaon University

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Thakurgaon

Thakurgaon University has formally begun its activities following the appointment of its first vice-chancellor.

Dr. Mohammad Israfil, a professor at the Department of Theatre and Performance Studies at the University of Dhaka, has been appointed the inaugural VC of the university.

The appointment was made through a Ministry of Education notification issued on Wednesday.

Born in Thakurgaon, Dr. Israfil obtained his BSS (Honours) in Political Science from the University of Dhaka in 1988.

He later completed a master's degree in Theatre and Performance Studies from the National School of Drama in Delhi in 1991. He earned his PhD from Rabindra Bharati University.

Dr. Israfil joined the Dhaka University as a lecturer in 1997 and has long been involved in teaching and research in theatre and performance studies.

PRAYER TIMING
MAY 8

Fazr	Juma	Asr	Maghrib	Esha
AZAN 4-15	12-30	5-00	6-34	8-00
JAMAAT 4-50	1-15	5-15	6-38	8-30

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

Ward quota returns to CU following court ruling

One student admitted per department

SM MAHFUJ AHMED

Although Chittagong University (CU) had administratively decided to abolish the ward quota for the 2025-26 academic session, admissions under the quota have ultimately been allowed following a court ruling.

The university admitted one student under the quota in each department, despite no mention of the ward quota in the admission circular or the published merit lists.

According to university sources, the decision to scrap the ward quota was taken at the second meeting of the university's admission test committee for the 2025-26 session. However, following subsequent court directives, admissions under the quota were reinstated.

A section of CU teachers, officers, and staff later filed a writ petition with the High Court seeking to retain the quota.

Following a preliminary hearing on December 15, 2025, a High Court bench comprising Justice Sikder Mahmud Razi and Justice Raziuddin Ahmed issued a rule asking the university vice-chancellor and the relevant admission committee to explain their decision.

After the final hearing, another bench comprising Justice Shashanka Shekhar Sarkar and Justice Umme Rahman delivered its verdict on February 25, 2026.

The court ordered the university to implement the previously issued rule.

The rule stated that the ward quota for children and spouses of university employees had long been recognised as an established benefit for first-year undergraduate admissions, which

the court considered with due importance.

In a letter signed by 18 teachers and 84 officers and staff members on behalf of the Chittagong University Employees' Unity Council, it was stated that the quota should be implemented "in the same way it has continued for generations," noting that the High Court had also directed its continuation.

The letter further said that at the seventh meeting of the admission committee held on March 31, 2026, the university decided to implement the ward quota in compliance with the court order. It also demanded the reinstatement of the previous 166 seats allocated

Prof Shamim Uddin said the university administration had initially abolished the quota, but the court later directed the university to revert to the previous system following petitions filed by a section of teachers, officers, and staff.

"As all admission-related activities had already been completed before the verdict was delivered, it was not possible to include the quota in the admission circular. Later, an academic meeting decided to admit one student from each department under the quota," he said.

Regarding the publication of the list of admitted students, he said the process was still

The university administration had initially abolished the quota, but the court later directed the university to revert to the previous system following petitions filed by a section of teachers, officers, and staff. As all admission-related activities had already been completed, it was not possible to include the quota in the circular.

PROF SHAMIM UDDIN, Pro-VC (academic)



under the quota.

CU Registrar Prof Dr Saiful Islam said admissions had been conducted in line with the High Court's directive. "The court asked us to maintain the long-standing practice. Although there was scope to admit 166 students under the quota, we limited it to 54, equivalent to the number admitted in the previous academic year," he said.

CU Vice-Chancellor Prof Dr Mohammad Al-Forkan acknowledged that the admission circular did not mention the ward quota, despite admissions being conducted under it. "Pro-Vice Chancellor (Academic) Prof Shamim Uddin will be able to explain the matter in detail," he said.

underway and the list would be published after all admissions were completed.

Students at CU had launched protests demanding the abolition of the ward quota on December 29, 2024. Their programmes included human chains, discussion meetings, sit-ins, and locking the university's main gate. In response to the protests, the university formed a seven-member committee to review the quota system.

For the 2024-25 academic session, the university decided to admit one student per department under the quota, with plans to abolish it entirely from the 2025-26 session. However, the latest court ruling has effectively reversed that decision.

Revitalise family planning

FROM PAGE 3

Public health specialist Abu Jamil Faisal said the decline in primary healthcare services is creating multiple problems, including the recent measles outbreak.

He said immunisation is a key component of primary healthcare, and disruptions in vaccination services contributed to the outbreak.

Similarly, the family planning programme, another major component of primary healthcare, has remained stagnant for years and requires urgent intervention, he added.

Ashrafi Ahmad, director general of the Directorate General of Family Planning, said funds had been allocated for contraceptive procurement and expressed hope that all types of contraceptives would be available by August this year.

State Minister for

Health MA Muhiit said the government's health plan is focused on strengthening primary healthcare and building a modernised health system.

He said the existing family planning structure is a major asset, but the system must evolve to meet changing needs.

Muhiit said health assistants, family welfare assistants, and community health care providers currently work under separate authorities, creating duplication in services.

To improve efficiency, the government is working to reorganise the structure, he said, adding that one lakh new health workers will also be recruited under the new system.

SM Ziauddin Hyder, special assistant to the prime minister, said the current health system is heavily dependent on

curative care, but the government wants to shift the focus toward preventive and promotive healthcare.

"And primary healthcare will be at the centre of the system," he said, adding that the government plans to overhaul the system within the next three years.

"We will reform the system without halting ongoing services ... We have already held meetings on how to mitigate the contraceptive crisis," he added.

Other health experts, family planning officials, and journalists also spoke at the programme.

TIB seeks PM

FROM PAGE 3

In Bangladesh to enhance the country's image on the global stage.

"We have sought the prime minister's support in this regard, and he assured us that necessary steps will be taken," he added.

The TIB executive director said the International Anti-Corruption Conference is held every two years. This year's conference will be held in the Dominican Republic. Only three Asian countries — Malaysia, Thailand and Korea — have hosted the event so far, he added.

"We think 2028 is the right time to host this conference in Bangladesh. The prime minister has agreed in principle. If the cabinet gives consent, Bangladesh will try to host it," he said.

Follow hajj regulations

FROM PAGE 3

individuals offering shelter. Fines in such cases could reach up to SAR 100,000 (approximately Tk 32.70 lakh), depending on the number of violators involved.

Authorities also said vehicles used to transport illegal pilgrims could be confiscated following legal proceedings.

Under the revised rules, only pilgrims holding officially approved hajj permits will be allowed to enter Makka and designated holy sites. The

restrictions apply to both foreign pilgrims and Saudi residents.

The regulations will remain in force from the first day of Dhu Al-Qi'dah until the 14th day of Dhu Al-Hijjah. During this period, holders of visit visas will not be allowed to enter or remain in Makka without valid hajj authorisation.

Saudi authorities said foreign residents found violating the rules could also face deportation and bans on re-entering the kingdom for up to 10 years.

গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার
মহাপরিচালকের কার্যালয়
বাংলাদেশ রেলওয়ে, রেলভবন, ঢাকা।

বিজ্ঞপ্তি

বাংলাদেশ রেলওয়ের সহকারী স্টেশন মাস্টার ও গার্ড গ্রেড-২ পদে লিখিত পরীক্ষার সময়সূচী প্রকাশিত হয়েছে। প্রকাশিত সময়সূচী বাংলাদেশ রেলওয়ের ওয়েবসাইট (www.railway.gov.bd) থেকে সংগ্রহ করা যাবে।

(স্বাক্ষর)
(এ এম সালাহ উদ্দিন)
যুগ্ম-পরিচালক (উন্নয়ন-ট্রাফিক) ও
আহ্বায়ক, বিভাগীয় নির্বাচন কমিটি
বাংলাদেশ রেলওয়ে, রেলভবন, ঢাকা।

GD-1058

B-R Powergen Limited (BRPL)
(A govt. owned power generation organization)
IEB Bhaban (8th floor), 8/A, Ramna, Dhaka-1000
www.brpowergen.gov.bd

e-Tender Notice

This is to notify that the following tenders have been invited in the national e-GP portal:

Sl/No	Tender ID	Tender description	Tender closing date & time
01	1271040	Design, Supply, Installation, Testing & Commissioning of 370 KWp Grid Tied Rooftop Solar PV Plant at Sreepur 160 MW Power Plant.	07-Jun-2026 15:00 BST
02	1265299	Procurement of schedule and unscheduled spare parts for starting air compressor for Mirsarai 163 MW Power Plant.	18-Jun-2026 15:00 BST
03	1267782	Supply, installation, testing & commissioning of HFO pressure regulating unit with all necessary auxiliaries for Mirsarai 163 MW Power Plant.	04-Jun-2026 15:00 BST

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

(Engr. Papon Das)
Superintending Engineer (O&M)

3C*3*
GD-1057

গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার
পরিবেশ অধিদপ্তর
পরিবেশ ভবন, ই/১৬ আগারগাঁও
শেরে বাংলা নগর, ঢাকা-১২০৭।
www.doe.gov.bd

স্মারক নং: ২২.০২.০০০০.০৮২.২০.০০৬.২৬-৪৭ তারিখ: ২১/০৫/২০২৬ বঙ্গাব্দ: ১৪৪৭/০৪/২০২৬ বিষ্কাপ

বিশ্ব পরিবেশ দিবস-২০২৬ উপলক্ষ্যে শিশু-কিশোর চিত্রাংকন প্রতিযোগিতা

বিষয়: প্রকৃতি ও পরিবেশ
স্থান: পরিবেশ অধিদপ্তর, সদর দপ্তর, আগারগাঁও, শেরে বাংলা নগর, ঢাকা।
তারিখ: ১৬ মে ২০২৬ (শনিবার) সময়: বিকাল ৩:০০ ঘটিকা
প্রতিযোগীর বয়স: ক-গুপ: অনূর্ধ্ব ৮ বছর; খ-গুপ: ৮ থেকে অনূর্ধ্ব ১২ বছর
গ-গুপ: ১২ থেকে অনূর্ধ্ব ১৬ বছর; বিশেষ চাহিদা সম্পন্ন গুপ: বয়স শিথিলযোগ্য
পুরস্কার: প্রতি গুপে ৩ (তিন) জন বিজয়ীকে পুরস্কার প্রদান করা হবে।
আগ্রহী প্রতিযোগীদের বেলা ২:৩০ ঘটিকার মধ্যে প্রয়োজনীয় উপকরণ (রেং, তুলি, বোর্ড ইত্যাদি) এবং জয় নিবন্ধন সনদের ফটোকপি নিয়ে পরিবেশ অধিদপ্তরের ৫ম তলায় উপস্থিত হতে হবে। বিশেষ চাহিদা সম্পন্ন শিশুদের ক্ষেত্রে এতদসংক্রান্ত সনদের ফটোকপি সঙ্গে আনতে হবে। পরিবেশ অধিদপ্তর কাটাঙ্গ পেনার সরবরাহ করবে।
বিজয়ী প্রতিযোগীদের নাম ২০ মে ২০২৬ তারিখে পরিবেশ অধিদপ্তরের নোটিশ বোর্ড ও ওয়েবসাইট www.doe.gov.bd-এ প্রকাশ এবং টেলিফোনে জানানো হবে।

(স্বাক্ষর)
৪/৫/২০২৬
রাঞ্জিনারা বেগম
পরিচালক
বর্ড ও রাসায়নিক পদার্থ ব্যবস্থাপনা
ও
আহ্বায়ক
শিশু-কিশোর চিত্রাংকন প্রতিযোগিতা-২০২৬
আয়োজন বিষয়ক কমিটি
ফোন: ০২-২২২২১৬৩৫৫

GD-1061

OBITUARY

It is with profound sadness that I share the passing of my father, **Engineer Mahmood Syed**, Retired Captain, who departed this world on **Tuesday, 28 April, at 9:30 a.m.**, at Evercare Hospital, Dhaka, at the age of 77.

Inna lillah wa inna ilayhi raji'un.

He was educated at **Armanitola Government High School (1955-1963)** and **Dhaka College (1963-1965)** and earned his **B.Sc. in Electrical Engineering** from **BUET** in 1969. He served in the **Bangladesh Army**, worked in the **Middle East**, and later served for nearly **15 years** at the **Bangladesh Steel and Engineering Corporation (BSEC)**. He also completed a **Postgraduate Diploma in Industrial Management** from **RVB Delta, Netherlands (1986)**, and earned an **MBA (Finance)**. He retired from **BSEC as General Manager (Engineering)** in 1994. He also worked as a management consultant and served as an **Honorary Faculty member (2015 to 2022)** at a private university.

He is survived by his wife, only son, and grandson. He was the eldest of 10 siblings. He was laid to rest in his family graveyard in **Patang, Barisal**.

We humbly seek forgiveness from anyone he may have unintentionally hurt and request your sincere duas for him. May Allah (SWT) forgive his shortcomings, envelop him in His mercy, and grant him the highest place in **Jannat-ul-Firdous. Ameen.**

Shabab Mahmood (Son)

Ensure workplace

FROM PAGE 3

and members of the Hijra community still do not fully enjoy equal wages, safe workplaces, or protection from harassment.

He added that the rights of workers in the informal and gig economies remain unclear, leaving many outside legal and institutional protection.

Speakers highlighted several issues, including the gap between minimum wages and inflation, fair compensation, workplace safety, and the independence of trade unions.

They said job insecurity remains a major concern, as nearly 84 percent of workers are employed in the informal sector.

Speakers also stressed the need for skill development, digital labour registration, and new employment opportunities to prepare workers for the

future labour market.

They said political and institutional weaknesses often hinder labour welfare initiatives and delay meaningful reforms.

The speakers also pointed to the lack of recognition for domestic workers and others in the informal labour sector.

They said workers from marginalised communities often do not receive proper dignity, social protection, or fair value for their labour.

Prime Minister's Special Assistant Saiyed Abdullah; lawmaker Mansura Akter; Bangladesh Garment Sramik Samhati President Taslima Akhter; Bangladesh Research Analysis and Information Network Executive Director Shafiqur Rahman; Network for People's Action member Anik Roy; and student leader Abdul Kader, among others, attended the event.

Govt plans int'l

FROM PAGE 10

to revitalise underutilised aviation infrastructure in the north.

Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology is carrying out the feasibility study for Bogura airport.

Bangladesh currently has 17 airports, including international and domestic airports, navigation-service-providing facilities used by the Bangladesh Air Force, and a number of old Short Take-Off and Landing airports.

There are only three international airports in the country: Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport in Dhaka, Shah Amanat International Airport in Chattogram, and Osmani International Airport in Sylhet.

The five domestic airports are Saidpur, Shah

Makhdum in Rajshahi, Jashore, Barishal, and Cox's Bazar.

Mir Shahe said the prime minister had announced at a public rally that an international airport with cargo facilities would be launched in Bogura.

Following the announcement, the Prime Minister's Office issued a directive, after which the Civil Aviation and Tourism Ministry formally began work on the project, he added.

Besides training Air Force pilots, the proposed flying academy would also help produce private-sector pilots, Mir Shahe said.

He said a new 10,500-foot runway would be required to launch the international airport, and a decision to expand the runway was taken during the visit.

Government of People's Republic of Bangladesh
Office of the Conservator of Forests
Wildlife & Nature Conservation Circle
Ban Bhaban, 5th floor, Agargaon, Dhaka.

Memo No. 22.01.0000.000.101.29.0007.26.1043 Date: 07/05/2026

e-Tender Notice/2025-26

e-Tender is inviting in the National e-Gp System portal (<https://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) for the procurement of the following package;

Sl. No.	Tender/Proposal ID	Name of Package	Closing Date and Time
01	1258104	Selection of Individual Consultant (Wildlife Specialist)	21-May-2026 at 14:00 PM

This is an online tender, where only e-Tender will be accepted in the National e-Gp portal and no offline/hard copy will be accepted.

To submit e-Tender, registration in the National e-Gp portal (<https://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) is required.

Further information and guideline are available in the National e-Gp System portal and from e-Gp Help Desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd).

(স্বাক্ষর)
০৫/০৫/২০২৬
Md. Sanaulah Patwary
Conservator of Forests
Wildlife & Nature Conservation Circle
Ban Bhaban, Agargaon Dhaka-1207
Phone No: 02-55007111
E-mail: cf-wildlife@bforest.gov.bd

GD-1059

ফ্যাক্টরী ও কমাশিল স্প্রেস বিক্রয়

মানিকগঞ্জ আরিচা হাইওয়ের উপরে সেভ ও গ্যাস লাইন সহ ৪২ বিঘা জায়গায় উপর ফ্যাক্টরী বিক্রয়। পাছপথে ১০,০০০ ঙ্কারফিটের এবং ১১,০০০ ঙ্কারফিটের কমাশিলার স্প্রেস বিক্রয় হইবে।
মোবাইল: ০১৭৫৭-০৬৯৫৯৪, ০১৯১২-৮১৯৩৭৮

GD-1061

COUNTERTERRORISM US focuses on Europe, leftists

AFP, Washington

US President Donald Trump's administration accused Europe of being an "incubator" for terrorism fueled by mass migration, in a new counterterrorism strategy unveiled on Wednesday.

The strategy also focuses on rooting out "violent left-wing extremists" including "radically pro-transgender" groups, as Trump's conservative administration steps up its political attacks on opponents.

It further places drug cartels in the Americas at the centre of counterterrorism efforts.

But some of its strongest language is reserved for Europe, home to numerous US allies who will be alarmed to see their continent in the Trump administration's crosshairs once again.

"It is clear to all that well-organised hostile groups exploit open borders and related globalist ideals. The more these alien cultures grow, and the longer current European policies persist, the more terrorism is guaranteed," the strategy said.

The fresh criticism of Europe comes just months after Trump's new national security strategy said the continent faced "civilizational erasure" due to immigration.



First responders inspect a collapsed building following an Israeli airstrike a day earlier in Beirut's southern suburb of Haret Hreik yesterday. Israel on Wednesday struck Beirut's southern suburbs in the first such attack in nearly a month, killing a senior Hezbollah commander from its elite Radwan force. At least 11 others were killed in strikes across the country's south and east, Lebanon's health ministry said. PHOTO: AFP

Mortar attack on Pak market kills six: police

AFP, Peshawar

Six people, including two children, were killed when mortar shells hit a market in a turbulent area of northwestern Pakistan, a police official said yesterday.

The attack took place in the Thall area of Hangu district in the province of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, which borders Afghanistan and also lies adjacent to Pakistan's formerly self-governed tribal areas.

The blast also wounded 13 people, three of whom were in critical condition, and there were fears the death toll could rise, a local police officer said.

Security forces cordoned off the area while rescue teams transported the wounded to nearby hospitals. Officials said security had been tightened as authorities worked to prevent further attacks.

No group has yet claimed responsibility for the attack.

Hangu has long experienced sporadic violence by militant groups such as Tehreek-i-Taliban Pakistan.

There has been an increase in militant attacks in Pakistan by such groups since the Afghan Taliban took over in Kabul in 2021, according to analysts.

Islamabad has accused Kabul of failing to root out militants sheltering on Afghan soil as they prepare to stage assaults on Pakistan, a charge the Taliban government in Kabul denies.

Britons set to punish Labour in local polls

AFP, London

Britons voted yesterday in local elections set to heap more pressure on beleaguered Labour Prime Minister Keir Starmer and energise the rise of hard-right and left-wing populists.

The ballot across Scotland, England and Wales is Starmer's biggest electoral test since his July 2024 general election landslide victory over the Conservatives.

Opinion polls predict grim results for Labour, which could amplify calls for Starmer, 63, to resign or face a long-rumoured party leadership challenge.

The prime minister and his wife voted at a polling station near parliament in Westminster.

Nigel Farage's anti-immigrant Reform UK and the left-wing Greens, led by self-described eco-populist Zack Polanski, are expected to benefit from widespread disillusionment.

Melanie Garson, associate professor of politics at University College London, said the vote was a "huge barometer for how the country is feeling about this political establishment".

"We've got, for the first time, significant pressure on the main political parties across every single council."

Polls will close at 10:00pm (2100GMT). Some results are expected overnight, but most will not come until today.

Around 5,000 local council seats, out of 16,000, are up for grabs across England, while in Wales and Scotland, voters will elect new devolved parliaments.

Starmer swept to power following 14 years of Conservative rule defined by austerity, Brexit and the tanking of the economy

under former prime minister Liz Truss.

But critics say he has swerved from one policy misstep to another. Starmer has also failed to fulfil his main promise of spurring economic growth, with impatient Britons still suffering a cost-of-living crisis, including from high energy prices.

Surveys suggest Labour will lose control of the devolved Welsh government in Cardiff for the first time since Wales got its own

there. Pollster Robert Hayward has predicted the ruling party could lose about 1,850 of the roughly 2,550 local authority seats it is defending.

Hayward has tipped Reform to take 1,550 seats from Labour and Kemi Badenoch's right-wing Conservatives – mostly in white, working-class areas. The Conservatives are also bracing for the loss of traditional strongholds.

"The two-party era has moved



parliament 27 years ago.

A More in Common poll published Tuesday projected Reform running neck-and-neck with the pro-independence Plaid Cymru in Labour's former heartland.

Labour is also fearful of a drubbing in Scotland, where the Scottish National Party is expected to extend its 19-year control of the devolved parliament in Edinburgh.

YouGov has predicted Reform could force Labour into third place

into a multi-party era," Badenoch told PA news agency. "But the fact is none of these new parties or Labour have a plan for the country."

Britain's media is full of rumours that ex-deputy prime minister Angela Rayner or Health Secretary Wes Streeting could try to oust Starmer after the results.

Neither is universally popular within Labour, however, and would need the backing of 20 percent of the party's MPs to launch a contest.

Myanmar retakes control of trade route to China

AFP, Yangon

Myanmar's military yesterday claimed to have recaptured a key northern transport corridor towards China after a 15-month battle, touting a counterblow to rebels in the civil war.

The nation's armed forces have been battling an array of opposition factions since a 2021 military coup that ousted the elected government of Aung San Suu Kyi.

Pro-democracy guerrillas fighting alongside ethnic minority armies have won significant victories, but in recent months have become increasingly fractured and suffered setbacks.

The military said it crushed "terrorist insurgent groups" along a route linking the central and second largest city of Mandalay to the northern hub of Myitkyina, about 50 kms from China's border.

"The operations lasted for over one year and three months, during which a total of 322 major and minor engagements were fought," the Myanmar commander-in-chief's office said in a statement.

Analysts say that offensive had the backing of China as it sought to shore up influence along its border, but Beijing reined in rebels as it feared Myanmar collapsing into a failed state.

AFP couldn't verify the claim.

Russia's 2-day Ukraine truce to begin at midnight

AFP, Moscow

The Kremlin yesterday said it would begin a two-day ceasefire with Ukraine starting at midnight that is meant to cover its patriotic May 9 parade, after ignoring a Ukrainian ceasefire earlier this week.

Moscow has warned foreign diplomats in Kyiv that it will strike the Ukrainian capital if Ukraine targets its May 9 commemorations.

"Yes, we are talking about the 8th and 9th of May," Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said, when asked by AFP if the ceasefire would come into effect from midnight.

Peskov said Russian security services were preparing for Saturday's event, "particularly given the terrorist threat" from Ukraine. Kyiv has struck Russian cities with drones as far as the Urals in recent days.

Peskov also said internet outages – which have caused some concern for Russians – in Moscow were "necessary".

Moscow has scaled back its May 9 parade – which marks the 1945 victory over Nazi Germany – this year as Ukraine struck deeper into Russia. It has removed military hardware from the event for the first time in nearly 20 years.

'We will crush terror ecosystem' Says Modi a year after Pakistan conflict

AFP, New Delhi

Prime Minister Narendra Modi yesterday said India remains "steadfast as ever" in its determination to defeat terrorism and its "enabling ecosystem", marking one year since a deadly clash with arch-enemy Pakistan.

Relations between nuclear-armed neighbours plummeted last year after an April 22 attack in Pahalgam in Indian-administered Kashmir killed 26 men, mostly Hindu tourists, leading to their worst conflict in decades.

India blamed Pakistan for backing the attack – a charge Islamabad denied – triggering tit-for-tat diplomatic measures and a sharp military escalation. The conflict escalated after India launched strikes on May 7, 2025 – on what it described as "terrorist camps" in Pakistan.

That prompted an immediate response from Islamabad, leading to airstrikes, drone swarms and heavy mortar fire between the two nuclear-armed neighbours.

"We remain as steadfast as ever in our resolve to defeat terrorism and destroy its enabling ecosystem," Modi said yesterday, a year on since the launch of "Operation Sindoor".

Modi's Hindu nationalist government used Sindoor, the Hindi word for the red powder which married Hindu women wear on their foreheads, as a sign that it was to avenge those widowed in the April 22 attack.

More than 70 people were killed on both sides. Pakistan claims to have shot down five Indian fighter jets. India has not disclosed any losses.

Meanwhile, Pakistan yesterday said it would defend itself strongly against any attack in a statement marking the anniversary of a conflict Islamabad calls "Marka-e-Haq" or "Battle of Truth".

The neighbours agreed to end the four-day conflict on May 10, a ceasefire first announced by US President Donald Trump.



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তারিখ: ০৬/০৫/২০২৬ ইং

ইভেন্ট সেবা নিবন্ধন পুনঃবিজ্ঞপ্তি

এতদ্বারা সকলের অবগতির জন্য জানানো যাচ্ছে যে, ঢাকা দক্ষিণ সিটি কর্পোরেশনের আওতাধীন বিভিন্ন সামাজিক অনুষ্ঠান কেন্দ্রের (Community Centre) সেবা মানোন্নয়নের লক্ষ্যে ইভেন্ট সেবা প্রদানকারী প্রতিষ্ঠান নিবন্ধনের কার্যক্রম গ্রহণ করা হয়েছে। সে লক্ষ্যে, আগ্রহী ইভেন্ট সেবা প্রদানকারী প্রতিষ্ঠানসমূহকে প্রশাসক, ঢাকা দক্ষিণ সিটি কর্পোরেশন বরাবর ১০০০/- (এক হাজার) টাকার পে-অর্ডার (অফেরতযোগ্য) জমা প্রদানপূর্বক আগামী ২০.০৫.২০২৬ খ্রিঃ তারিখ বুধবার বিকাল ৪.০০ ঘটিকার মধ্যে প্রধান সমাজকল্যাণ ও বস্তি উন্নয়ন কর্মকর্তার দপ্তর হতে (অফিস চলাকালীন) আবেদনপত্র সংগ্রহ ও জমা প্রদান করা যাবে। আবেদন পত্রের সাথে সামাজিক অনুষ্ঠান কেন্দ্রের নির্ধারিত বাৎসরিক এককালীন টাকার পে-অর্ডার (সাথে ১৫% ভ্যাট এর পৃথক পে-অর্ডারসহ) উক্ত সময়ের মধ্যে প্রধান সমাজকল্যাণ ও বস্তি উন্নয়ন কর্মকর্তা, ঢাকা দক্ষিণ সিটি কর্পোরেশন-এর কার্যালয়ে জমা প্রদানের জন্য অনুরোধ করা হলো। উল্লেখ্য যে, পূর্বে আবেদনকারীগণের পুনরায় আবেদন করার প্রয়োজন নেই।

যে কোন কারণে উক্ত বিজ্ঞপ্তি বাতিল বা নতুন শর্ত আরোপের ক্ষমতা কর্তৃপক্ষ সংরক্ষণ করেন।


মোহাম্মদ মোবাহ্বের হাসান
(উপসচিব)

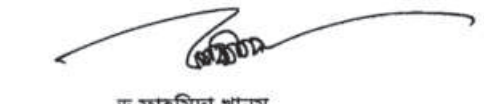
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ঢাকা দক্ষিণ সিটি কর্পোরেশন।
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GD-1062

সাধারণ বিজ্ঞপ্তি

এতদ্বারা সংশ্লিষ্ট সকলের অবগতির জন্য জানানো যাচ্ছে যে, পরিবেশ, প্রতিবেশ, জীববৈচিত্র্য সংরক্ষণ, দূষণ নিয়ন্ত্রণ ও জলবায়ু পরিবর্তন বিষয়ে গবেষণা, পলিসি সাপোর্ট ও প্রশিক্ষণ কার্যক্রম গ্রহণ এবং পরামর্শ সেবা প্রদানের লক্ষ্যে পরিবেশ, বন ও জলবায়ু পরিবর্তন মন্ত্রণালয়ের অধীনে কোম্পানী আইন, ১৯৯৪ এর ২৮ ধারা অনুযায়ী প্রস্তাবিত প্রতিষ্ঠানের নাম National Institute of Environment and Climate Change (NIECC) নামে একটি বাণিজ্য সংগঠন হিসেবে গঠন করার উদ্যোগ গ্রহণ করা হয়েছে। বাণিজ্য মন্ত্রণালয় (মহাপরিচালক, বাণিজ্য সংগঠন অনুবিভাগ) কর্তৃক গত ৩০ এপ্রিল, ২০২৬ তারিখের ২৬.০০.০০০০.০০০.১৫৬.৩২.০০১২.২৩.১০৭ নং স্মারকে ছাড়পত্র প্রদান করা হয়েছে। উক্ত সংগঠনের খসড়া সংঘবিধি ও সংঘস্মারক (Memorandum & Articles of Association) সংগঠনের লক্ষ্য, উদ্দেশ্য এবং সদস্যপদ প্রদানের নিয়মাবলী নির্ধারিত হয়েছে। এই সংগঠন গঠন বা নামের বিষয়ে কারো কোনো আপত্তি, পরামর্শ বা অভিযোগ থাকলে, এই বিজ্ঞপ্তি প্রকাশের ১৫ (পনেরো) কার্যদিবসের মধ্যে নিম্নস্বাক্ষরকারী বা মহাপরিচালক, বাণিজ্য সংগঠন অনুবিভাগ, বাণিজ্য মন্ত্রণালয়, বাংলাদেশ সচিবালয়, ঢাকা-এর নিকট লিখিতভাবে জানানোর জন্য অনুরোধ করা হলো। উপরোক্ত সময়ের মধ্যে কোনো আপত্তি বা পরামর্শ পাওয়া না গেলে, নির্ধারিত সময়ের পর আইন অনুযায়ী পরবর্তী কার্যক্রম গ্রহণ করা হবে।


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পরিবেশ, বন ও জলবায়ু পরিবর্তন মন্ত্রণালয়
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The Daily Star

FOUNDER EDITOR: LATE S. M. ALI

This recurring road carnage has to stop

Innovative solutions and political will key to curbing crash fatalities

Yet another harrowing set of statistics on deaths caused by road crashes was revealed in the Road Safety Foundation's April 2026 report. In 463 crashes across the country, according to the report, 404 people were killed and 709 were injured. Although both the number of incidents and the death toll in April are lower than those in March, there is no justifying complacency. We celebrated Eid-ul-Fitr in March this year, a time when many travel to see their loved ones. As a result, traffic increases, and so does the number of crashes.

However, while reflecting on the lives already lost on our roads this year, we must take stock of our preparations regarding road safety for the upcoming Eid-ul-Azha, which is only about two and a half weeks away. The measures taken during Eid-ul-Fitr, including increased presence of law enforcers and enhanced monitoring of highways (where most crashes occur), are good but not enough to drastically reduce road crashes. Even scheduling specialised trains to address the Eid rush does not reduce road fatalities. The major causes are unfit vehicles, unskilled drivers, long working hours for drivers without mandatory rest, disregard for traffic laws, and reckless driving, and these concerns remain unaddressed. Motorbike crashes alone constituted 30.66 percent of total collisions in April, and more than one-third of the total road crash fatalities were motorbike riders. Even falls from these two-wheelers—when riders lose control—can turn fatal for riders and passengers. This is how a 17-year-old met his death on Wednesday night in Dhaka's Demra area when riding a motorbike with his friend.

The causes and solutions of road crashes in Bangladesh have long been known. Experts and road safety advocates have, *ad nauseam*, suggested changes to policy and regulation to mitigate collisions on our roads, but no government, whether political or non-political, could implement those. A powerful nexus of transport owners, associations, political actors, and an obdurate bureaucracy continues to reign over our roads, where around 66 people die untimely deaths and countless are maimed daily. Ad hoc solutions to road safety did not work in the past; they won't work in the future.

Also, taking lessons from the recent fuel crisis, innovative solutions must be sought to reduce our dependency on road transportation. Experts point to railways as an alternative. This mass transit is not only fuel efficient but has the potential to reduce both congestion and unhealthy competition on our roads, forcing bus owners to improve the quality of service. The government's mulling of private investment in railways gives us hope. However, a strong institutional presence is required for such a transition to work. What is required most is a strong political will to bring down road crash deaths.

Address urea supply concerns urgently

Shortfalls expected to disrupt upcoming Aman season

It is concerning to learn that Bangladesh may face a urea shortfall of around one lakh tonnes for the upcoming Aman season if the government fails to secure fresh import commitments, after two consecutive international tenders reportedly failed to attract adequate supply. The agriculture ministry currently holds 3.54 lakh tonnes of urea. Even with domestic plants resuming production in May (following gas-related closures), total availability by the end of June is projected at around 5.5 lakh tonnes against an estimated requirement of 6.65 lakh tonnes for the Aman season. The resulting gap of roughly one lakh tonnes can have a disruptive impact when farmers begin preparing seedbeds in July.

Bangladesh usually sources a large portion of its imported urea from Gulf producers under government-to-government (G2G) arrangements, rather than through open tender. The recent departure from the usual practice was due to the crisis in the Middle East, but open bidding has also failed to elicit adequate response from suppliers amid concerns over shipping risks and market volatility. As per a report by this daily, the government floated two tenders on March 25 and April 1, seeking a total of four lakh tonnes of urea. Officials say one tender drew no bids, while the other received only a partial offer of 50,000 tonnes. A fresh re-tender was issued on April 27. Even if things move as expected this time, we have to remember that fertiliser procurement is a slow process, often taking up to 180 days from contracting to distribution at the farm level.

The importance of early stocking cannot be overstated. The Aman season, which runs from July to November, is the second-largest rice-growing cycle after the Boro season. It accounts for nearly 40 percent of the country's annual rice output, and timely availability of fertiliser, particularly urea, is key to sustaining yields. Any disruption in supply can result in lower production, with broader implications for our food security and rice stocks. While the wider impact of the Middle East crisis—both on supply chains and prices—is undeniable, the government must work around prevailing bottlenecks to ensure adequate stocks in time.

Expediting tendering and strengthening G2G negotiations are, of course, immediate priorities under the current circumstances. But it is equally important to address the structural vulnerability in fertiliser sourcing. Since much of the country's imported urea transits through the Strait of Hormuz, the government should consider diversifying supply sources instead of relying heavily on Gulf nations. Strengthening diplomatic engagement, including maintaining functional ties with key regional actors, is also necessary to help ensure an uninterrupted flow of fertiliser shipments through the Hormuz strait.

THIS DAY IN HISTORY

Allied nations celebrate VE Day

On this day in 1945, Great Britain, the United States, and other Allied countries celebrated Victory in Europe Day. Cities in the US, UK and Western Europe, along with those in the Soviet Union, Canada and Australia put out flags and banners, rejoicing the defeat of the Nazi war machine during World War II.

Why is the judiciary failing to check arbitrary detention?



Nafiu Alam Shupto is a lawyer and activist. He can be reached at nafjulalamshupto@gmail.com

NAFIUL ALAM SHUPTO

When we speak about arbitrary arrest and detention, the discussion usually focuses on holding law enforcement agencies, especially the police, accountable. Unlawful arrests, politically motivated cases, misuse of remand, custodial torture, forced confessions, and the culture of impunity in law enforcement are seen as the main problems. In every political crisis, every mass arrest, and every claim of custodial abuse, the conversation almost always finds one issue: the need to reform the police.

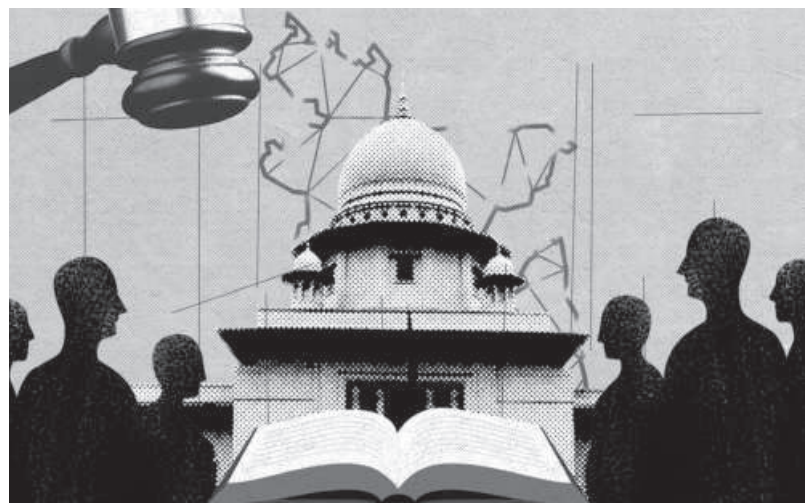
However, we must acknowledge that the police do not act alone in sustaining the culture of arbitrary arrests and detention. They may arrest a person, produce an accused before court, seek remand, and prepare the narrative. But in a constitutional system, police action is not supposed to become lawful merely because the police say so. There is in fact a judicial body placed between the citizen and the coercive power of the state. That body is supposed to ask questions: was the arrest lawful? Was the accused produced before a court within the required time? Are there reasonable grounds for detention? Is remand truly necessary? Has the accused been subjected to torture, threats, coercion, or intimidation? Is detention being used to aid investigation, or has it already become punishment before trial?

In Bangladesh, public conversation rarely asks whether the judiciary performs its constitutional role with adequate seriousness. We criticise the police, often rightly so. We criticise the executive, also rightly. But we rarely examine the judicial conduct that allows unlawful or excessive police action to continue. And this silence has consequences. In many cases, the first appearance of the accused before a magistrate becomes a procedural ritual rather than a meaningful exercise of judicial scrutiny. Remand prayers are allowed with limited scrutiny. Bail is refused without sufficient reasoning. Police narratives are accepted as facts. Allegations of torture or coercion are

not always dealt with urgently. Vague accusations, particularly in politically sensitive cases, are allowed to be used to justify detention. Often the accused stands before the court, but the court does not always insulate the accused from the state.

That is where the real problem lies: the police may initiate arbitrary detention, but the judiciary often gives it legal life. This is neither to suggest that every judge or magistrate acts improperly, nor to deny the structural pressures within which the lower judiciary operates.

Courts are overburdened and



VISUAL: ANWAR SOHEL

overcrowded. Magistrates work under enormous pressure. The criminal justice system is under-resourced and, in politically sensitive cases, judicial officers may also have to negotiate with invisible pressures, institutional caution, or fear of consequences. But none of these changes the core principle: when the state seeks to take away a person's liberty, the court's responsibility is at its highest.

A court is not meant to be an administrative extension of the investigation. The judiciary exists to test or resist state power, especially when that power is exercised against individuals who are vulnerable, unpopular, accused, poor, or

inconvenient for any political party.

In the political sphere, arrests are often made during periods of protest, opposition mobilisation, labour unrest, student movements, or wider political crises. In these times, the criminal justice system is often used not only to investigate or prosecute for crime but also to control dissent, intimidate communities, and create fear. The police may be the visible arm of that process, but the courts are where it is either checked or validated.

When bail is denied without meaningful reasoning, the process is itself a punishment. Where charges of custodial abuse are not challenged, impunity for police intensifies. When the judiciary bypasses tough questions in politically sensitive cases, constitutional protection becomes selective. And selective liberty is not liberty at all.

That is why judicial accountability must enter the conversation. This, of course, does not mean undermining judicial independence, which

decisions, particularly in politically sensitive or mass arrest cases, must reflect individualised judicial assessment. The accused should not be treated as part of a crowd merely because the police case is drafted that way. Third, any allegation of torture, coercion, unlawful arrest, or procedural violation must trigger judicial inquiry. Courts should not wait for the accused to prove abuse from a position of custody and fear. Fourth, data on remand, bail, and pre-trial detention should be made more transparent. If particular categories of cases consistently result in remand or bail refusal, that should be visible and open to scrutiny.

Additionally, the higher judiciary must set clearer standards for magistrates on arrest, remand, bail, and custodial protection, including by activating the Monitoring Committee for Subordinate Courts under Chapter IA of the Supreme Court Rules. This is especially urgent after the Appellate Division's guidelines in *BLAST v Bangladesh* on sections 54 and 167 of the Code of Criminal Procedure (CrPC), and the 2025 CrPC amendment giving statutory force to several safeguards. But these reforms will mean little if magistrate courts continue to approve police action mechanically rather than treating these safeguards as binding constitutional duties.

Finally, the legal community must also reflect on its own silence. Lawyers, civil society actors, academics, and rights organisations often criticise police abuse, but hesitate to speak about judicial failure. Part of that hesitation comes from respect for the institution, but part of it comes from fear of contempt proceedings. There is also the reality that lawyers must continue to appear before the same courts.

Bangladesh does need police accountability urgently, but after more than five decades of repeating the same demand, we must admit that police reform alone cannot end arbitrary detention. The police station is only the first site of abuse. The courtroom can either stop that abuse or formalise it. Too often, the latter transpires. Every remand order, every bail rejection, every silent acceptance of a questionable arrest reveals whether that constitutional promise is alive or merely decorative. We have spent decades asking why the police abuse power. It is time to ask why the courts so often allow that abuse to continue.

INTERNATIONAL THALASSAEMIA DAY

We must make thalassaemia treatment widely accessible



Dr Manzur Morshed is clinical haematologist, former professor at Bangladesh Medical University, and chairman of Bangladesh Thalassaemia Foundation. He can be reached at manzur.morshed@gmail.com.

MANZUR MORSHED

Thousands of families across Bangladesh are quietly battling a lifelong condition known as thalassaemia. This inherited blood disorder prevents the body from producing adequate amounts of healthy red blood cells, leaving patients dependent on regular blood transfusions and continuous medical care. In many parts of the world, thalassaemia is no longer a life-limiting disease. With proper treatment, patients can lead near-normal lives—pursuing education, careers, and even starting families.

For most thalassaemia patients, regular blood transfusion is a lifeline. But in Bangladesh, this lifeline is often uncertain. Voluntary blood donation rates remain low. While almost all blood requirement is fulfilled by voluntary donations in developed countries, only around 30 percent of blood supply results from voluntary donations in Bangladesh. Therefore, patients and families are frequently forced to arrange donors on their own.

Finding blood that is compatible is also not easy as even blood of the same group from a donor may be incompatible with the patient's blood. Additionally, screening standards

and storage facilities are inconsistent, particularly outside major urban centres. This increases the risk of infections, transfusion reactions, and other complications. As a result, many patients live with chronically low haemoglobin levels—far below what is necessary for appropriate growth and a decent quality of life.

However, repeated transfusions can also lead to a buildup of iron in the body. Over time, the excess iron damages vital organs—including the heart, liver, and endocrine system. To counter this, patients require iron chelation therapy—that is, medication used to remove excess iron. But these drugs are expensive, and some require prolonged injections, making adherence difficult. Thus, many patients are unable to continue treatment regularly.

In many countries, thalidomide is increasingly being used to raise haemoglobin levels, including in Bangladesh. Although this drug has allowed many transfusion-dependent patients to reach a transfusion-free state, its safety has not been confirmed by studies and it is therefore not approved for treating thalassaemia in the West. Additionally, unrestricted

and indiscriminate use of thalidomide is fraught with several dangerous side effects. As a result, most patients continue to rely on older, less effective options with variable outcomes.

On the other hand, effective management of thalassaemia depends on regular monitoring—tracking iron levels, organ function, and blood parameters. In reality, many patients do not have consistent access to such testing. Advanced investigations, such as MRI for iron assessment, are limited. Without proper monitoring, complications are often detected late, thus reducing the effectiveness of the treatment.

Another issue is that specialised thalassaemia care in Bangladesh is concentrated in major cities. Patients from rural areas have to travel long distances to receive treatment. Many centres provide transfusion services but no comprehensive care involving specialists such as haematologists, cardiologists, and endocrinologists. This fragmented approach leads to gaps in care and poor long-term outcomes. Thalassaemia treatment is long-term and expensive. Blood, medications, tests, and transportation require patients to bear substantial monthly costs. For comprehensive treatment, including monthly blood transfusions, a thalassaemia patient on average spends Tk 10,000 to Tk 15,000 per month. In some cases, the expenses increase further. Thus, due to financial constraints, the majority of thalassaemia patients in the country are unable to continue proper treatment.

Time and again it is emphasised that

thalassaemia is largely preventable. Carrier screening before marriage or during pregnancy can help identify at-risk couples and prevent the birth of affected children. However, in our country, awareness of this nature and facilities for thalassaemia testing are still limited. As a result, every year new children are being born with thalassaemia. According to government data, around 10,000 children are born with thalassaemia in Bangladesh each year.

Thalassaemia patients often face challenges in education, employment, and social acceptance. Stigma and misconceptions can further isolate affected individuals and families. However, it is important to understand that thalassaemia patients and carriers are different. Thalassaemia patients are always unwell and require regular blood transfusions along with medication. In contrast, thalassaemia carriers remain healthy, with no obvious symptoms. They do not require blood transfusions. When both husband and wife are thalassaemia carriers, their children face a risk of being born with thalassaemia. However, a thalassaemia carrier can easily marry a healthy person. In such cases, their next generation will be completely healthy.

Meaningful change is possible—but only through collective action spearheaded by the government. Increasing voluntary blood donation, ensuring affordable access to treatment, expanding thalassaemia screening facilities, and developing coordinated national policies are essential.

Why our education reform keeps missing the mark



Dr Manzoor Ahmed is professor emeritus at BRAC University. He was the convener of the consultation committee on primary and non-formal education appointed by the Ministry of Primary and Mass Education, as well as of the consultation committee on secondary education appointed by the Ministry of Education. Views expressed in this article are the author's own.

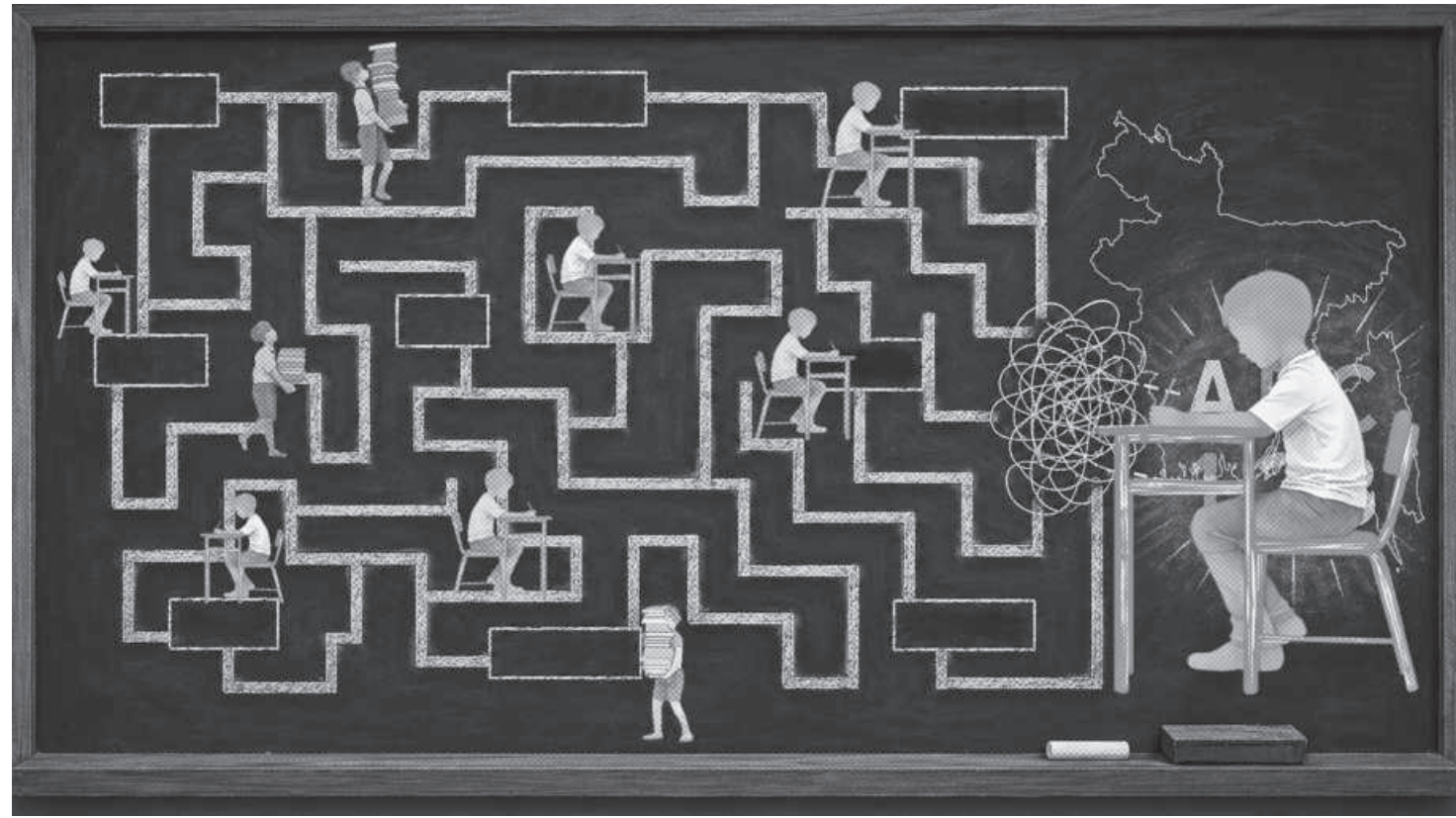
MANZOOR AHMED

That school education does not work for most of our children cannot be passed off as a hyperbole anymore. When most children cannot read, write, or count at a functional level after completing five years of primary education, how can it be called an effective system?

The situation has not arisen suddenly, and the complaints are not new. Various development projects in the education sector have been carried out with national funds and external assistance. The failures and absence of results have accumulated over decades. Can the upcoming budget for FY2026-27 portend a reversal of the trend?

With the benefit of hindsight, it can be said that the development projects labelled as sector-wide approaches (SWAPs) for the comprehensive development of primary and secondary education for all children have failed to live up to their promises. The Primary Education Development Programmes (PEDPs 1 to 4) were designed to cover schools under the Directorate of Primary Education, leaving out almost half of the children, including some of the most disadvantaged groups, who do not or cannot attend government schools. Similarly, at the secondary level, at least one-third of the children attending non-government institutions and madrasas have been outside the scope of the development projects. Moreover, as it turns out, highly centralised, top-down management of project activities often did not mesh with the specific conditions and needs of schools across the country. The activities were disconnected from each other and had specific quality and equity barriers.

In each five-or-more-year project, detailed lists of activities were compiled for each area, following the 178-page manual for preparing the Development Project Proforma (DPP). A DPP is not supposed to change once approved. Funds were spent. Tick marks in monitoring reports against each activity indicated that the tasks were accomplished. The time period for every development programme was extended multiple times,



VISUAL: ANWAR SOHEL

and even then, funds remained unused. Most critically, even though claims were made of completion or major progress, the results have not been visible in student learning outcomes in schools. It is a case, as it were, of a successful surgery, but the patient died.

The education minister, state minister for primary and mass education, adviser to the prime minister on education, and the prime minister himself have spoken about the importance of education and how it is the government's priority. These are commendable expressions of intent on the new government's part. Concerned citizens and many educationists ask whether the targets and actions, and the decision-making

approach followed, will ensure that the key problems in education will receive attention and a real change in the system will happen. Some of the early decisions with an eye to symbolic actions that may catch public attention give rise to such questions.

The prime minister told a recent parliament session that education development work had been initiated in 43 areas. The number itself is not the problem. But could too many

in the classroom, seem to be the preferred strategy for improving quality. High-stakes scholarship exams in the early years are being brought back, which takes teachers' time and attention away from the majority of students. Admission tests have been proposed to replace the lottery system for school admission. Admission by test in early grades is discriminatory and promotes commercial coaching and illegal admission business.

have also been announced: school uniforms, schoolbags, and shoes for students; school meals; waiver of tuition fee for girls up to tertiary education; and "one teacher, one tab," among others. Each has a justification in its own right and can be helpful when implemented as elements of a holistic plan to achieve key objectives of quality, equity, and inclusion. The comprehensive plan and strategy, however, are still missing.

Several of the actions are intended to attract students to school, whereas the main problem is to make teaching and learning in school meaningful and attractive to students and thus keep them engaged in learning. School meals have proven to be beneficial for learning and nutrition. These have to be scaled up and managed to avert health and safety risks for children. Involvement of the local community and education NGOs can help. There is much to be done to improve teachers' skills and performance through immediate and longer-term measures. Devices and digital portals could be part of these. However, various technology initiatives, when done in isolation, have been mostly a waste of resources.

A comprehensive reform perspective focusing on selected strategic objectives is needed to bring together various initiatives within a coherent plan. The objectives that deserve particular attention should comprise:

- In every school, teachers as a team, led by the headteacher, need to develop a short-term (one-year) and a medium-term (three-year) plan for improving teaching and learning in every classroom. The team will be accountable for the visible and measurable learning outcomes of students.

- In each class, lagging students should be given remedial lessons beyond regular class hours in the school.

- It must be ensured with a time bound plan that the poverty of a family will not be an obstacle to children's participation in school.

- To achieve these objectives, upazila-based and school-based decentralised plans and programmes should be developed under national guidelines and implemented as a pilot project.

Experience suggests that a creative and innovative approach is required to move forward. Remaining bound to the present structure will not take us there. To kick-start the process, a high-level expert task force should be appointed to guide the effort. Its work will face resistance from various vested interests, which can be overcome with high-level government and political resolve.

How did the BJP gain a stronghold in West Bengal?



Zillur Rahman is a political analyst and president at the Centre for Governance Studies (CGS). He hosts 'Tritiya Matra' on Channel i. His X handle is @zillur.

ZILLUR RAHMAN

The result of the just concluded West Bengal legislative assembly election is significant not only because of the change of power but also because it marks the emergence of a new structural phenomenon in eastern India and, in addition, a new variable for Bangladesh-India relations. Winning by gaining 206 seats and nearly 46 percent of votes (an increase of almost eight percentage points from last year) was the result of not only the Bharatiya Janata Party's (BJP) electoral campaign but also its ability to consolidate its political base in one of the most problematic states for the right-wing party.

Among the reasons behind BJP's victory are obviously the powerful anti-incumbent sentiments among West Bengal's citizens. Growing concerns about lack of employment opportunities, the non-expansion of industrial enterprises, cases of corruption associated with the recruitment practices of Trinamool Congress (TMC), and the functioning of local political patronage networks contributed significantly to it. Welfare programmes,

mainly aimed at benefiting women, created a social buffer against discontent but failed to cover demands related to economic development and administration.

Moreover, the BJP succeeded in changing some elements of its previous campaign strategy. Having learned from its failures in 2021, the party made efforts to diminish its "outsider" perception by leveraging local leadership, language, and culture, while developing its organisational capabilities in North Bengal and in border areas.

A third element of the BJP's success can be attributed to changes in social coalitions on which the TMC relied before. The fact that Hindus consolidated their political preferences and there emerged some division among minorities has become a critical point. Certainly, it cannot be said that the BJP achieved its goal largely through social polarisation; however, the transformation of social coalitions became a crucial factor in this victory.

One of the most controversial features of

this election is its pre-campaign phase called Special Intensive Revision (SIR). As a result of the process, about nine million names were removed from voter rolls. It decreased the number of registered voters from around 76 million to about 68 million, with about 2.7 million people not reinstated after SIR. Though it may seem quite normal, its criteria raised significant concerns, specifically regarding "logical discrepancy."

It would be incorrect to claim that the BJP gained victory exclusively thanks to SIR. Various factors influenced the process, including anti-incumbent sentiment, the BJP's strengthening of its organisational power, the reconfiguration of social coalitions, and the messages the party delivered to voters.

SIR has caused a paradoxical situation. First, despite the deletion of voters' names, turnout reached nearly 93 percent. Nevertheless, in 48 constituencies, the number of registered voters decreased, representing a disproportionately large proportion of those deleted. In this case, even though the overall voter turnout increased, the competitive equilibrium shifted in certain areas where

this factor was especially important.

Having mentioned all of this, it would be incorrect to claim that the BJP gained victory exclusively thanks to SIR. Various factors influenced the process, including anti-incumbent sentiment, the BJP's strengthening of its organisational power, the reconfiguration of social coalitions, and the messages the party delivered to voters.

However, one of the main themes of the election was precisely the message dominating it. The slogan "detect, delete, deport" reflected a specific attitude towards Bangladesh and its alleged infiltration of West Bengal. These issues were directly associated with the region and its borders and thus constituted an extremely important element of BJP's strategy.

Border constituencies played a decisive role in determining the election outcome. As calculations show, 44 seats bordering Bangladesh, along with adjacent regions, proved crucial to the BJP's victory.

From the perspective of Bangladesh, the outcome of the election has significant implications as well. The Petrapole-Benapole corridor is responsible for more than 70 percent of land-based trade between Bangladesh and India. Besides, about 2.8 million people use the border region for transit each year. Therefore, political changes there affect not only the issues of border crossings, visa access, and trade facilitation, but also Bangladesh's economic interests. Although Dhaka responded

pragmatically, focusing on bilateral issues, new opportunities emerged to resolve some of them in Bangladesh's favour.

For example, the issue of the Teesta water-sharing agreement, long blocked by West Bengal's state government, may face fewer obstacles now that interests align between the state and the centre. However, further events remain unpredictable. Consequently, the post-election political situation is characterised by two contradictory features: coordination with West Bengal on specific problems and politicisation of Bangladesh-India relations, which might lead to further mutual mistrust.

Against the backdrop of unstable, somewhat fragile relations that have existed since August 2024, such a political strategy can entail adverse consequences beyond diplomatic channels. Cross-border movement and people-to-people contacts may become complicated. Since August 2024, the number of visas and medical travel permits has decreased; in addition, the use of transshipment sites has increased trade costs. The current situation may deteriorate due to a harsher line on border issues.

The West Bengal election should be seen not as an isolated phenomenon but as part of the process of political realignment in India. From the perspective of Bangladesh, its implications will be seen through a gradual change in relations depending on the extent to which electoral rhetoric turns into practical actions.

CROSSWORD
BY THOMAS JOSEPH

- ACROSS**
- 1 TV, radio, etc.
 - 6 Get smart
 - 11 Glorify
 - 12 Dome-shaped home
 - 13 Leaving in large numbers
 - 15 Sinking signal
 - 16 Museum focus
 - 17 Summer, in Paris
 - 18 Crooked
 - 20 Grownup
 - 23 Takes it easy
 - 27 Prudent
 - 28 Database option
 - 29 Apply, as force
 - 31 Account
 - 32 Follow the outline of
 - 34 Boar's mate
 - 37 Flamenco cheer
 - 38 Greek X
 - 41 Kicking back
 - 44 Brat's opposite
 - 45 Cash drawers
 - 46 Face features
 - 47 Like conga lines
- DOWN**
- 1 Base meal
 - 2 Trade fair
 - 3 Speaker's platform
 - 4 Suffering
 - 5 Finally
 - 6 Beam above a door
 - 7 Nest item
 - 8 Lotion additive
 - 9 Decisive defeat
 - 10 Jot down
 - 14 Tick off
 - 18 Wide awake
 - 19 Squander
 - 20 Really impress
 - 21 Twice cinq
 - 22 Take advantage of
 - 24 Menagerie
 - 25 Drop the ball
 - 26 Messy room
 - 30 Fantasy characters
 - 31 Perfumes
 - 33 Boxing great
 - 34 Checkout act
 - 35 "Dear me!"
 - 36 Costume parts
 - 38 Soda choice
 - 39 Unwieldy ship
 - 40 Tiny
 - 42 Writer Harper
 - 43 Collins base

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12-19

YESTERDAY'S ANSWERS

G	E	R	E	F	O	R	T		
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RABINDRA JAYANTI SPECIAL

A DEEPER ABSENCE:

Beyond the rituals of Rabindranath

DOWEL BISWAS

As we celebrate Rabindranath Tagore's 165th birth anniversary today, he returns in fragments in the country—as lines on posters, songs on stage and television, recreated songs, a garlanded photograph in institutional ritual. Tagore's familiarity is unequivocal, as if he had blended with the soil, air and spirit of Bengal. At the same time, turning the man's achievements into our own is somewhat misleading. It produces the illusion of presence while concealing a deeper absence. What is inherited is Tagore as memory, not Tagore as thought.

It is easier to preserve the grand aesthetics of Tagore than confront the



VISUAL: DOWEL BISWAS

difficult one. Rabindra Sangeet survives in carefully rehearsed cadence, quotations circulate endlessly online, institutions commemorate him with ritual precision. Yet much of what Tagore wrote resists comfort and consensus. In *Nationalism* (1917), he called nationalism "a cruel epidemic of evil" and described the nation as "the organization of politics and commerce whose purpose is power and prosperity." The words remain startling because Tagore himself would later become inseparable from national identity in South Asia.

Jana Gana Mana and *Amar Shonar Bangla* were not written as national anthems. They became

is striking because it rejects purity in favour of human connection. Elsewhere in the same novel, Tagore observes: "When a fortress is besieged from all sides, there is nothing narrow-minded about guarding it with one's life." Between those two ideas lies Tagore's lifelong tension—between identity as protection and identity as enclosure.

Even his most familiar lines are often stripped of their intellectual demand. "Chitto jetha bhoysshunyo, uchcho jetha shir" — "Where the mind is without fear and the head is held high" — survives as a ceremonial aspiration across South Asia. But the poem continues: "Gyan

jetha mukto" — "Where knowledge is free." The line asks not merely for pride, but for intellectual freedom, for a society free from fear, hierarchy and inherited mental enclosure. The quotation survives more comfortably than its implications.

The same flattening shapes the reception of his educational philosophy. Through Visva-Bharati University at Santiniketan, Tagore attempted to imagine learning beyond colonial rigidity and mechanical discipline. "The highest education," he wrote, "is that which does not merely give us information but makes our life in harmony with all existence." Yet the systems he resisted—rote memorisation, examination obsession, intellectual conformity—continue to dominate much of South Asian education.

Tagore's fiction also complicates the softened image now commonly circulated. The women of *Streer Patra*,

impenetrable." Contemporary culture, however, increasingly prefers the smaller wisdom. His lines circulate online detached from essays, speeches and arguments, transformed into consumable inspiration. He fits social media more easily than sustained reading.

He anticipated this erosion long before the digital age. In *Nationalism*, Tagore warned against societies intoxicated by speed, urgency and mechanical efficiency. "There are ideals which do not play hide-and-seek with our life," he wrote. "They slowly grow from seed to flower, from flower to fruit." The sentence feels almost oppositional to the accelerated logic of contemporary culture, where immediacy is rewarded and contemplation steadily disappears.

Even *Ekla Cholo Re* is frequently misunderstood. "Jodi tor daak shune keu na ashe, tobe ekla cholo re" — "If no one responds to your call, then walk alone" — now circulates as motivational shorthand. But the song speaks less of heroic individualism than ethical loneliness: the burden of remaining morally awake when collective courage collapses.

Tagore's later writings grew darker as he watched fascism, militarisation and imperial violence reshape the world. In *Sabhyatar Sankat* (Crisis in Civilization), he wrote: "Manusher opor bishwas harano paap" — "It is a sin to lose faith in humanity." Today the line is quoted sentimentally. In context, it emerged from exhaustion, grief and civilisational anxiety. It was not comfort. It was resistance.

Perhaps this explains why Tagore survives so powerfully and yet so partially. What remains visible are fragments: songs detached from philosophy, poetic lines separated from political argument, ritual replacing engagement. Tagore is quoted more than read, performed more than debated, commemorated more than interrogated.

And yet the persistence itself reveals something important. The anxieties within his work remain unresolved: nationalism and humanity, identity and freedom, speed and contemplation, conformity and conscience. The "safe" Tagore survives comfortably in cultural ritual. The more difficult Tagore—the one suspicious of organised power, moral uniformity and collective vanity—still waits beneath the surface of reverence.



NEWS

UK slaps sanctions on Bangladeshi travel

FROM PAGE 2
According to the UK government, some sanctioned networks lured migrants seeking better opportunities before forcing or pressuring them into military service or work in Russian weapons factories.

British authorities highlighted Russia's "Alabuga Start" programme, linked to a UK sanctioned entity, which reportedly recruits foreign workers for drone manufacturing.

The UK said Russia has sharply increased drone attacks on Ukraine in recent months, causing civilian casualties and damage to critical infrastructure.

British officials noted that Russia launched more than 200 drones per day into Ukraine during March 2026, the highest monthly level recorded so far, and warned that April figures could surpass that number.

The sanctions aim to disrupt supply chains supporting Russia's drone operations, including companies and businessmen providing key components and technical support from third countries.

UK Sanctions Minister Stephen Doughty said, "The practice of exploiting vulnerable people to prop up Russia's failing and illegal war in Ukraine is barbaric."

"These sanctions expose and disrupt the operations of those trafficking migrants as cannon fodder and feeding Putin's drone factories with illicit components to target innocent civilians and vital infrastructure," he said.

Doughty added, "The UK continues to lead international efforts to disrupt Russia's war machine, ramping up pressure on its economy and confronting its hybrid threats. We stand shoulder to shoulder with Ukraine in defence of European security and our shared values."

The sanctions also target individuals and entities based outside Russia, including in Thailand, accused of supplying drone components and other military-related goods to Russia.

Among those sanctioned is Pavel Nikitin, whose company develops the VT 40 drone, a low-cost attack

drone widely used by Russian forces in Ukraine.

The UK also sanctioned three individuals linked to the Russian state for allegedly recruiting foreign nationals to fight in Ukraine on behalf of Russia.

One of them, Polina Alexandrovna Azarnykh, is accused of helping recruit and transport people from countries, including Egypt, Iraq, Ivory Coast, Nigeria, Morocco, Syria and Yemen, through Russia into Ukraine.

According to the UK, many of these recruits were deployed to frontline combat positions with little training and under harsh conditions.

The British government said it would continue using sanctions to counter Russia's military activities and what it described as "hybrid threats", while maintaining support for Ukraine.

Officials said this marks the first use of the GIMTiPS regime to tackle human trafficking and the use of migration as a tool to destabilise other countries.

Seven-day holiday

FROM PAGE 12
toilets for women and men at suitable places along roads and highways.

The draft policy, prepared on the initiative of the Local Government Division, aims to ensure hygienic, standard, and user-friendly public toilet facilities across the country.

It gives special importance to toilet facilities for women, children, persons with disabilities, elderly people, and marginalised communities.

It says an effective management model and funding system must be ensured to keep public toilets functional and sustainable in the long term.

The draft also calls for proper monitoring and evaluation of its implementation, and adds that it should be updated when necessary.

It also makes septic tanks mandatory for storing public toilet waste, which must not be allowed to flow into rivers, canals, beels or other water bodies, as this could pollute water.

The health ministry will take steps to raise public awareness about toilet use and hygiene rules.

The draft also says ministries and divisions must prepare time-bound action plans to implement the policy.

Three BNP polls pledges

FROM PAGE 12
42.5 lakh Farmers' Card. Each beneficiary would receive a yearly payment of Tk 2,500.

As many as 16,515 victims of the July uprising would also get allowances next fiscal year.

The families of 846 July martyrs would receive Tk 20,000 every month as honorariums, while 15,669 victims would get Tk 10,000 to Tk 20,000 every month based on three categories of injury.

Allocation will also be given for monthly honorariums and festival allowances to religious leaders of different faiths, one of the election pledges of the BNP to promote religious and social harmony.

The programme will have 255,666 beneficiaries next fiscal year, including imams, muezins, khadems, priests, monks and caretakers of temples, churches and monasteries.

Delhi seeks Dhaka's help

FROM PAGE 12
with Bangladesh, and several of them have been pending for over five years..." Jaiswal said.

He further added, "We expect Bangladesh to expedite nationality verification so that the repatriation of illegal immigrants can take place smoothly."

The MEA spokesperson noted that the repatriation of "illegal" Bangladeshi immigrants would require cooperation from Dhaka.

monasteries.

Imams would receive Tk 5,000, muezins Tk 3,000 and khadems Tk 2,000. Similar stipends would be given to priests, monks, and caretakers of temples, churches, and monasteries.

The scheme for old-age persons and widows will get 1 lakh additional beneficiaries, taking the tally to 62 lakh.

Currently, the social security budget covers 95 programmes, of which 39 are identified as pro-poor, benefiting nearly 8 crore people. About Tk 117,000 crore has been allocated for social net programmes this fiscal year.

Development partners, including the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, have advised preparing the safety net budget in a more structured manner.

three days after the BJP registered a landslide victory in the West Bengal Assembly elections, winning 207 seats in the 294-member House.

The issue of illegal infiltration was among the BJP's key poll planks in Bengal. The saffron party had vowed to stop infiltration by ensuring fencing along the Bangladesh border in West Bengal.

The party had also promised to identify illegal Bangladeshi infiltrators in the state and deport them to Bangladesh.

9-yr-old boy dies

FROM PAGE 2
by one Faisal Mia. There, Sabuj Mia, 34, a rickshaw puller, allegedly pumped compressed air through the child's rectum using a tyre inflator as a "prank", said Ramim's father, Ripon.

He added that the child soon fell critically ill as his abdomen swelled severely. Hearing his screams, locals rescued him and rushed him to Narsingdi District Hospital.

After primary treatment, doctors referred the child to Dhaka for advanced care. He later died around 5:15pm while undergoing treatment at a private hospital in the capital.

Ripon demanded exemplary punishment for those who killed his son.

Md Rakib Askari, duty doctor at the emergency department of Narsingdi District Hospital, said excessive air pressure likely ruptured parts of Ramim's intestine, causing internal bleeding, severe abdominal pain, and breathing complications.

Following an autopsy, the child's body was taken to his family's village home in Narsingdi, where he was buried yesterday afternoon.

Meanwhile, the family filed a written complaint in the evening against Faisal Mia, Sabuj Mia, and four to five unnamed others, Ripon said.

Confirming the matter, OC Shahed said legal action would be taken as per the complaint and that operations were already underway to arrest those involved.

Tagore's 165th birth anniv today

FROM PAGE 12
international acclaim.

Tagore's literary corpus is vast, encompassing short stories like *Kabuliwala* and *Postmaster*, novels such as *Gora*, *Chokher Bali*, and *Shesher Kobita*, and plays including *Raktakarabi* and *Dak Ghar*.

As a composer, Tagore created over 2,000 songs — collectively known as *Rabindra Sangeet* — which continue to shape Bangla cultural and musical identity.

Tagore's contributions extend beyond literature. He composed the national anthems of both India and Bangladesh and founded Visva-Bharati University.

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Sustainable and Renewable Energy Development Authority (SREDA)
Power Division
IEB Bhaban (9th-10th Floor), Ramna, Dhaka-1000
www.sreda.gov.bd

INVITATION FOR TENDER (Revised)

01	Ministry/Division	Power Division Ministry of Power, Energy & Mineral Resources
02	Agency	Sustainable and Renewable Energy Development Authority (SREDA)
03	Procurement Entity Name	Member (Administration), SREDA
04	Invitation for	Procurement of Supply & Installation of VRF AC (for CHIGO Brand) Parts & repair with Related Services & Maintenance.
05	Invitation Ref. No.	27.02.0000.013.99.086.24-181
06	Date	29 April, 2026

KEY INFORMATION		
07	Procurement Method	Open Tendering Method (National)


FUNDING INFORMATION		
08	Budget and Source of Funds	Revenue Budget, GoB

PARTICULAR INFORMATION		
09	Tender Name	Procurement of Supply & Installation of VRF AC (for CHIGO Brand) Parts & repair with Related Services & Maintenance.

	Date	Time
10	Tender Publication date	30 April, 2026
11	Tender Collection date	30 April, 2026
12	Tender Last Selling Date	12 May, 2026
13	Tender closing Date & Time	13 May, 2026 2:00 PM
14	Opening Date and Time	13 May, 2026 2:30 PM

15	Name & Address of the office: Selling, Receiving & Opening Tender Document	Sustainable and Renewable Energy Development Authority (SREDA) IEB Bhaban (9 th -10 th Floor), Ramna, Dhaka-1000
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INFORMATION FOR TENDERER		
16	Eligibility of Tenderer	As per TDS
17	Brief Description of Goods	As per schedule
18	Brief Description of Related Services	As per schedule
19	Price of Tender Document	Tk. 500/-
20	Tender Security Amount	Tk. 12,000/-
21	Name	Chowdhury Md. Hamid Al Mahub
22	Designation	Member (Administration)
23	Address	IEB Bhaban (9 th -10 th Floor), Ramna, Dhaka-1000
24	Contact details	Tel: +8802-55110338; e-mail: member.admin@sreda.gov.bd
25	The Procuring Entity reserves the right to accept or reject all tenders.	


Chowdhury Md. Hamid Al Mahub
Member (Administration) SREDA
Phone: +8802-55110338
e-mail: member.admin@sreda.gov.bd

GD-1052



Career Opportunity

Ref: 30.34.0000.073.29.000.26.170

Date: 07 May 2026

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- **Develop and execute long-term financial strategies** to support our growth and profitability goals.
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- **Provide accurate and timely financial reporting** to the MD, board of directors, and other stakeholders.
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Email: dgmhr@biman.gov.bd



GD-1055



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Office of the Executive Engineer
Civil Division-2, Kurmitola, Dhaka-1229
Website:- www.caab.gov.bd

File No. 30.31.0000.423.02.017.25-1593

Date:- 07/05/2026

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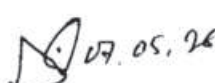
This is to notify for all concerned that e-Tender is invited and published in the National e-GP System Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) for procurement of works for the following Tender. Interested persons/firms can see details by visiting the website www.eprocure.gov.bd.

Sl No	Tender ID	Brief description of Works	Tender Reference No.	Last date & time of selling	Last date & time of submission
01	1272489	R.M.O Building during the year 2025-2026 (S.H.-Repair & Maintenance of Member (OPS) Banglow outside painting, Garrage, staffs room, cloth cutting, furniture including other associated works at Shaheenbagh, Tejgaon R/A), Dhaka.	30.31.0000.000.401.31.0165 .26.477, Date:04-05-2026	21-May-2026 12:00	21-May-2026 14:00
02	1272404	Repair and maintenance of works outside wall plaster, exterior paint, inside wall renewing interior paint, renewing window grill enamel paint, renewing wooden French polishing, uPVC rainwater pipe, uPVC soil & waste pipe, water supply and water tank, drainage system, apron including other allied works of B-type building No. 1 at Banani R/A, Dhaka.	30.31.0000.000.401.31.0110 .26.496, Date:05-05-2026	21-May-2026 12:00	21-May-2026 14:00
03	1272362	Repair and maintenance of playground facilities drainage system, pavement plantation base including other associated works of Civil Aviation School & College at shaheenbagh, Tejgaon R/A), Dhaka.	30.31.0000.000.401.31.0122 .26.497, Date:05-05-2026	21-May-2026 12:00	21-May-2026 14:00
04	1272325	Repair & maintenance of interior and exterior painting with sanitary fitting, fixing including other associated works of Aviation Bhaban at shaheenbagh, Tejgaon R/A, Dhaka.	30.31.0000.000.401.31.0067 .26.503, Date:06-05-2026	21-May-2026 12:00	21-May-2026 14:00
05	1264685	R.M.O. Building during the year 2025-2026 (S.H.-Essential repair & maintenance of E-5/4 in/c. other allied works at Kurmitola R/A) at HSIA, Kurmitola, Dhaka.	30.31.0000.000.401.31.0103 .26.411, dt:22-04-2026	21-May-2026 12:00	21-May-2026 14:00
06	1264647	R.M.O. Building during the year 2025-2026(S.H.-Essential repair & maintenance works of U-67(B), U-68(B), U-69(B) & U-29 = 04 units at Kurmitola R/A) at HSIA, Kurmitola, Dhaka.	30.31.0000.000.401.31.0070 .26.408, dt:22-04-2026	21-May-2026 12:00	21-May-2026 14:00
07	1264596	R.M.O Building during the year 2025-2026 (S.H.-Repair & maintenance works of D-type building units No D-3/3, D-3/7, D-6/2 in/c. other related works at Kurmitola R/A) at HSIA, Kurmitola, Dhaka.	30.31.0000.000.401.31.0083 .26.413, dt:22-04-2026	21-May-2026 12:00	21-May-2026 14:00
08	1272212	R.M.O. Building during the year 2025-2026 (S.H.- Essential repair & maintenance of U-type tin shed (staff) quarter No. 153 to 160, 63, 67, 68 = 11 units in/c. other allied works at Irshall colony R/A) at HSIA, Kurmitola, Dhaka.	30.31.0000.000.401.31.0095 .26.485, Dt:05/05/2026	21-May-2026 12:00	21-May-2026 14:00
09	1261765	Repair & maintenance of internal connecting road at Earpur, Savar, at HSIA, Kurmitola, Dhaka.	30.31.0000.000.401.31.0058 .26.384, Dt:19/04/2026	21-May-2026 12:00	21-May-2026 14:00
10	1272565	Repair & maintenance of damaged floor, Sliding window, repair of Collapsible gate in/c. other allied works of M.T. pool Officers & staff room, garrage & workshop building No.1 to 6) at HSIA, Kurmitola, Dhaka.	30.31.0000.000.401.31.0098 .26.476, Dt:04/5/2026	21-May-2026 12:00	21-May-2026 14:00
11	1272595	Essential Repair and maintenance of H-4 (1-10) units in/c. other allied works at Kurmitola R/A) at HSIA, Kurmitola, Dhaka.	30.31.0000.000.401.31.0102 .26.479, Dt:04/5/2026	21-May-2026 12:00	21-May-2026 14:00

নং-৩০.৩১.০০০০.০৫১.১৪.০০১.২৬/১১৭

তারিখ:- ০৭/০৫/২০২৬ খ্রি.

সাইজ:- (১২ ইঞ্চি x ৪ কলাম)।


(Engr. Nasim Al-Islam)
Executive Engineer (Civil)
Civil Division-2
CAAB, Kurmitola, Dhaka.
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GD-1050

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh

Local Government Engineering Department
Office of the Executive Engineer
District: Tangail
www.lged.gov.bd

Memo No. 46.02.9300.000.01.014.25-2424

Date: 05-05-2026

e-Tender Notice No. 60/2025-2026 [LTM/OTM]

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

Sl No.	Tender ID No.	Name of Scheme	Package No.	Last selling date & time of e-Tender document	Closing & opening date & time of submission e-Tender document	Remarks (LTM/OTM)
1.	1268234	Rehabilitation of Grammin Bank-Handulipara Road from Ch.00-1300m under Basail Upazila, District: Tangail (Road ID No. 393095081)	CAFDRIRP/Tangail/VR/FD/W-60/2025-26	20-05-2026 & 16.00pm	21-05-2026 & 15.00pm	LTM
2.	1268235	Rehabilitation of Kashil UP Office-Moytha Bazar via Fulki UP office Road from Ch. 4300-6200m under Basail Upazila, District: Tangail (Road ID No. 393093003)	CAFDRIRP/Tangail/UNR/FD/W-61/2025-26	20-05-2026 & 16.00pm	21-05-2026 & 15.00pm	LTM
3.	1268236	Rehabilitation of Mahmudnagar UPC Office (N Bazar)-Sanka Bazar via Joybog Road from Ch. 750-1750m & Ch. 3600-6550m under Nagarpur Upazila, District: Tangail (Road ID No. 393763008)	CAFDRIRP/Tangail/UNR/FD/W-62/2025-26	20-05-2026 & 16.00pm	21-05-2026 & 15.00pm	OTM

1. 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.
2. To submit e-Tender, registration in the National e-GP System Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) is required.
3. Detail about the tender have shown in e-Tender notice and e-Tender document.

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

Mohammad Qamruzzaman
Executive Engineer
LGED, Tangail
E-mail: xen.tangail@lged.gov.bd

GD-1046

Govt plans int'l-standard airport in Bogura

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government plans to launch an international-standard airport in Bogura, alongside establishing a flying academy and a full fledged modern airbase to produce skilled pilots.

The existing Bogura airport is currently being used by the Bangladesh Air Force as a training school.

Members of a delegation led by Civil Aviation Minister Afroza Khanam Rita disclosed the plans after visiting the Bogura airport area yesterday.

Civil Aviation State Minister M Rashiduzzaman Millat, LGRD State Minister Mir Shahe Alam, and Chief of Air Staff Air Chief Marshal Hasan Mahmood Khan also visited the airport by a special helicopter.

The plans are part of a government initiative to gradually reactivate closed domestic airports in the northern districts to boost regional economic activity through improved connectivity.

Bogura airport tops the government's priority list, followed by Ishwardi, Thakurgaon and Lalmonirhat, as part of a broader plan

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4



Farmers in the haor areas of the Sylhet region are struggling to feed their precious animals as cattle feed prices soar due to floods. Prices of fodder, hay, granular cattle feed and mustard oil cakes have all gone up, leaving farmers concerned about how they will feed the animals that are their primary source of income.

PHOTO: STAR

Floods trigger cattle feed crisis in Sylhet haors

STAR REPORT

People living in the haor areas of Sylhet are struggling to maintain their cattle after floods destroyed crops and washed away fodder sources, causing a sharp rise in cattle feed prices.

Locals said cattle rearing is the main source of livelihood for many families in the region. However, the recent floods submerged vast stretches of boro paddy fields, leaving farmers struggling to collect fodder for their livestock.

According to market sources, the price of hay, the primary feed for cattle, has more than doubled in three months. Hay that was previously sold at Tk 300 to Tk 350 per maund is now being sold at Tk 800 to Tk 850.

Prices of other cattle feed items have also surged. Granular cattle feed, which used to cost Tk 1,150 per sack, is now selling for Tk 1,500, while the price of mustard oil cake and other feed has increased from Tk 40 per kilogramme to Tk 60.

Fajr Ali, a hay trader in Ikram Haor in Baniachong upazila of

Habiganj, said the shortage was caused by severe damage to seeds due to flooding in the haor region.

"Earlier, we could easily collect hay from local farmers, but now we have to bring it from distant districts at higher costs," he said.

He added that rising transportation costs were also contributing to the price hike.

The price of hay, the primary feed for cattle, has more than doubled in three months. Hay that was previously sold at Tk 300 to Tk 350 per maund is now being sold at Tk 800 to Tk 850.

Nazrul Islam, a farmer from Baniachong upazila who owns 10 cows, said he was struggling to continue cattle farming due to soaring feed prices.

"The amount of hay that used to cost Tk 400 before now costs Tk 1,000. Besides hay, prices of granular feed, oil cake, and other cattle feed have also increased significantly," he said.

He feared that inadequate feeding would reduce milk production and affect the health of the cattle.

Another farmer, Abdus Shahid from Hakaluki Haor in Kulaura upazila of Moulvibazar, said he recently purchased 30 maunds of hay at Tk 1,000 per maund to keep his cattle alive.

"The cost of maintaining the farm has increased several times, while profits have declined sharply. I am already running the farm with borrowed money," he said.

"If feed prices continue to rise, I may have no option but to leave this profession," he added.

Habiganj District Livestock Officer Dr Md Nurul Islam said the authorities were encouraging farmers to cultivate grass and supplying them with grass seeds.

Dr Abu Zafar Md Ferdous, director of the Divisional Livestock Office in Sylhet, said around three million cattle are in Sylhet division.

He said a monitoring cell had been formed to assess the damage, and the issue had been given top priority.

SHAPLA CHATTAR CRACKDOWN

Dipu Moni, 2 journos on May 14: ICT

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The International Crimes Tribunal-1 yesterday ordered authorities to produce former foreign minister Dipu Moni, Ekattor TV's former editor in chief Mozammel Haque Babu, and principal correspondent Farzana Rupa on May 14 in a crimes against humanity case.

The three-member tribunal passed the order following a prosecution plea linked to the 2013 Hefazat-e-Islam rally at Shapla Chattar in Dhaka.

Chief Prosecutor Md Aminul Islam told reporters that investigators had found "primary involvement" of the trio in events surrounding the crackdown.

"On the next date, they may be shown arrested in this case. They will then be taken to a safe home for necessary interrogation in the interest of the investigation," he said.

The tribunal also set June 7 for submission of the investigation report.

The former minister and the two journalists are already in jail in separate cases.

The prosecution told the tribunal that Dipu Moni, then foreign minister, campaigned internationally to frame the dispersal of Hefazat activists as action against "unruly people".

Mozammel Babu and Farzana Rupa allegedly attempted to portray the Hefazat rally as "hate speech" and spread "false information" after the operation.

Aminul said Ekattor TV aired a programme, "Shomikaron", immediately after the crackdown to divert public attention by denying casualties and featuring statements from "controversial individuals", including local ruling party activists and former officials.

He claimed these reports and interviews were part of a "systematic and pre-planned" effort to conceal the actual events.

He further said that the accused could face liability under the doctrine of "joint enterprise" if evidence shows they aided or abetted crimes committed during the operation.

Measles outbreak grips Mro villages in Bandarban

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Bandarban

A measles outbreak has gripped remote Mro villages in Kurukpata union of Alikadam upazila in Bandarban. According to local health authorities, the infection has spiralled "virtually out of control".

As of 4:30pm on Wednesday, hospital sources reported 77 measles cases.

Since April 25, a total of 166 measles cases have been identified, with 138 patients receiving hospital care. Of them, 58 have recovered and been discharged, while 77 remain under treatment.

During this period, 28 patients received outpatient or emergency care.

Dr Mohammad Hanif, upazila health and family planning officer, said, "Our health complex has only 30 beds, but we are currently providing care to 120-130 patients daily. Doctors, nurses, and health workers are working under severe hardship, yet we are providing round-the-clock services."

Most of the affected are children from remote Mro communities.



A local Mro youth organisation alleged that vaccination teams never reached remote hill villages, leaving children vulnerable. Many families mistook measles for common fever or relied on traditional beliefs, delaying treatment and worsening the spread.

The organisation demanded mobile medical teams, intensified vaccination, safe drinking water, and nutrition support.

Meanwhile, at a press conference yesterday, District Civil Surgeon Dr Md Shahin Hossain Chowdhury claimed that the district had achieved 97.99 percent vaccination coverage.

He also claimed that in Alikadam and remote Kurukpata Union, 8,043 children out of a target of 7,932 had already been vaccinated, achieving 101.04 percent of the vaccination target.

When pressed about unvaccinated children in remote villages, he admitted that extreme remoteness and communication breakdowns might have prevented coverage in some areas.

Teacher on 3-day remand over rape of child

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Netrokona

A local court yesterday placed madrasa teacher Amanullah Mahmudi Sagar on three-day remand in a case filed for raping and impregnating an 11-year-old girl in Netrokona's Madan upazila.

Police produced Sagar before the Netrokona Senior Judicial Magistrate Court with a seven-day remand plea. After hearing arguments, the court granted three days, said Officer-in-charge Mohammad Tariqul Islam of Madan Police Station.

Sagar was arrested on Wednesday by Rab-14 from Gouripur in Mymensingh and handed over to the Madan police.

On April 23, the victim's mother filed a rape case against him and another person.

According to the complaint, on October 2 last year, Sagar lured the girl into his room after classes ended, raped her, and threatened to expel her if she spoke out.

On April 18, the girl's mother noticed sudden physical changes and took her to a diagnostic centre, where doctors confirmed pregnancy. Police later conducted another medical examination and verified the matter.

Sub Inspector Akhtaruzzaman of the police station, also the investigation officer, said the case was filed after medical confirmation.

Bangladesh Shipping Corporation
"BSC Bhaban", Saltgola road, Chittagong

REF: 18.16.0000.373.01.058(13).25-26 Date: 06.05.2026

Invitation of Tender

S.L No.	Tender ID	Name of the Tender	Tender closing & Opening date, time & Place
1.	COMC-02052026 Dated: 06.05.2026 Ref: 18.16.0000.373.01.058(13).25-26	BPC-058(13)/INTERNATIONAL LIMITED TENDER FOR TRANSPORTATION OF 100,000.00 MT (± 10% SUPPLIER'S OPTION) ARABIAN LIGHT CRUDE OIL (ALC) FROM YANBU/RASTANURA TERMINAL, SAUDI ARABIA TO CHITTAGONG, BANGLADESH BASIS LAY-CAN 05 JUNE, 2026 ON ACCOUNT OF BANGLADESH PETROLEUM CORPORATION (BPC). N.B: IMCC ENLISTED BROKERS ARE ELIGIBLE FOR PARTICIPATING IN THE TENDER.	12-05-2026 12:00 PM LT & 12-05-2026 12:05 PM LT AT BSC BHABON, CTG
2.			

General Manager (Chartering)
Phone: 031-728269
E-mail: gm-cht@bsc.gov.bd

গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার
অধ্যক্ষের কার্যালয়
ঢাকা মহিলা পলিটেকনিক ইন্সটিটিউট
email: dhakampi1985@gmail.com
www.dmpi.polytech.gov.bd

ফরম নং-০১.০৩.০০০০.০১৫.০০১.৯৯.০০০১.২৬-২১৮ তারিখ ০৭.০৫.২০২৬

নিলাম বিজ্ঞপ্তি

ঢাকা মহিলা পলিটেকনিক ইন্সটিটিউট পুরাতন ৪টি টিনশেড ভবন ও একটি ০৩ তলা বিশিষ্ট ভবন ভেঙ্গে উদ্ধারযোগ্য মালামাল অপসারণ এবং ৪৯টি বিবিধ প্রজাতির ছোট-বড় পাখ কাটা ও অপসারণের নিমিত্ত নিলামের আহ্বান করা হয়েছে। প্রকৃত দরদাতাদের অত্র প্রতিষ্ঠানের ঠোঁট শাখা থেকে দরপত্র গ্রহণ/ক্রয় পূর্বক নির্ধারিত সময়ে প্রতিষ্ঠানে সংরক্ষিত টেন্ডার বাসে জমা (ভবন ভাঙ্গার ক্ষেত্রে) প্রধান অথবা নিলামে অংশগ্রহণকারী হিসাবে (পাখ কাটার ক্ষেত্রে) নাম তালিকাভুক্ত করতে হবে।

ক্রমিক	স্মারক নং	বর্ণনা	দরপত্র শোনার সময় ও স্থান
০১	০১.০৩.০০০০.০১৫.০০১.৯৯.০০০১.২৬-২১৮, তারিখ: ০৬.০৫.২০২৬	Dismantling of old dilapidated building at Dhaka Mohila Polytechnic Institute.	১৭ মে ২০২৬ দুপুর ১২:০০ টা
০২	০১.০৩.০০০০.০১৫.০০১.৯৯.০০০১.২৬-২১৭, তারিখ: ০৭.০৫.২০২৬	ক্যাংগাসের অভ্যন্তরে বিবিধ প্রজাতির ছোট-বড় মিলিয়ে ৪৯ (উনপঞ্চাশ) টি পাখ কাটা ও অপসারণসহ (চিকিৎসকৃত)	১৭ মে ২০২৬ সকাল ৯:০০ টা থেকে বেলা ১১:০০ টা পর্যন্ত

নির্ধারিত তথ্যের জন্য (www.dmpi.polytech.gov.bd) ওয়েবসাইট ভিজিট করুন।

০১.০৫.২৬
মোঃ খোরশেদ আলম
অধ্যক্ষ
ঢাকা মহিলা পলিটেকনিক ইন্সটিটিউট

Public interest must

FROM PAGE 3
rights for women and affirmative action on women's rights and that the same principle applied to other fundamental rights.

"If rights are being taken away, we will write against that," he said.

On reporting militancy and extremism, Zaffar said mistakes could happen in journalism, but newspapers must acknowledge them, correct them and move forward.

Journalists should continue reporting on violence, terrorism and militancy but should avoid glorifying terrorism or militant groups, he said. "What we have tried to tell our colleagues is: continue reporting on acts of violence, terrorism and militancy, but make sure we do not glorify terrorism or militant groups. We must also avoid dehumanising those accused of extremism," he said.

Speaking about how Pakistan's history of military rule had affected free speech and press freedom, Zaffar said "military rule and free speech don't go together".

"When there is military rule, how can you even talk about free speech?"

He said there had been "complete censorship" during periods of military rule and that fundamental rights had been taken away. According to him, the military had remained part of Pakistan's political system, directly or indirectly.

Zaffar said the struggle for freedom

had continued over the years, with journalists and media organisations securing gains, including the abolition of the Press and Publication Order, which he described as a "draconian law" introduced by Ayub Khan in the 1960s.

On editorial independence, Zaffar, who has served as editor of Dawn since 2010, said editors usually faced "zero involvement" from management in editorial matters.

Management might discuss or disagree with editorial decisions after publication, but not beforehand, he said.

Asked about pressures on Dawn, he said such pressure had existed over the past few decades and had continued largely because the newspaper had developed a policy centred on public-interest journalism.

At the outset of the programme, Mahfuz Anam, editor and publisher of The Daily Star, welcomed Zaffar and described Dawn as "a beacon of light".

He said establishing independent journalism in Pakistan, "whose most prominent feature is not democracy", was "really fantastic", adding that he knew "for a fact" how much pressure the Pakistani military and other vested groups exerted on Zaffar and Dawn.

Kamal Ahmed, consulting editor of The Daily Star, conducted the event. Teachers and students from journalism departments of different universities attended the programme.

বি-আর পাওয়ারজেন লিমিটেড (বিআরপিএল)
আইইবি ভবন (৯ম তলা), ৮/এ, রমনা, ঢাকা-১০০০
www.brpowergen.gov.bd

ক্র্যাপ ম্যাটেরিয়ালস (Scrap Materials) বিক্রয়ের নিলাম বিজ্ঞপ্তি

বি-আর পাওয়ারজেন লিঃ (বিআরপিএল) এর কডডা ১৫০ মেঃওঃ ডুয়েল ফুয়েল বিদ্যুৎ কেন্দ্র, গাজীপুর এর Scrap Materials যেখানে যে অবস্থায় আছে ভিত্তিতে নিলামে বিক্রয়ের উদ্দেশ্যে বাংলাদেশের প্রকৃত যোগ্য ব্যক্তি/প্রতিষ্ঠানের নিকট হতে স্বহস্তে স্বাক্ষরিত দরপত্র আহ্বান করা যাচ্ছে। আগামী ২০/০৫/২০২৬খ্রিঃ অফিস চলাকালীন সময় পর্যন্ত নির্বাহী পরিচালক (অর্থ ও হিসাব), বিআরপিএল এর দপ্তর হতে দরপত্র দলিল সংগ্রহ করা যাবে। এ সংক্রান্ত পূর্ণাঙ্গ নিলাম বিজ্ঞপ্তি বিআরপিএল এর ওয়েবসাইট (www.brpowergen.gov.bd) এ প্রকাশ করা হয়েছে।

মোঃ ওয়াহিদুর রহমান
মহাব্যবস্থাপক (এইচআর ও এডমিন)
মোবাইলঃ ০১৭১১৯০৮০৩৭

সোনালী ব্যাংক পিএলসি
বিশ্বস্ত ও স্মার্ট

সোনালী ব্যাংক পিএলসি এর উনিশতম বার্ষিক সাধারণ সভার নোটিস;

তারিখঃ ২০.০৫.২০২৬; রোজ বুধবার সময়ঃ বেলা ১১:০০ ঘটিকা

এই মর্মে নোটিস দেওয়া যাচ্ছে যে, সোনালী ব্যাংক পিএলসি এর উনিশতম বার্ষিক সাধারণ সভা (19th Annual General Meeting) ২০ মে ২০২৬ রোজ বুধবার বেলা ১১:০০ ঘটিকায় প্রধান কার্যালয়ের পর্যদ কক্ষে অনুষ্ঠিত হবে। উক্ত বার্ষিক সাধারণ সভার আলোচ্য বিষয়সমূহ নিম্নরূপঃ

-: আলোচ্যসূচী :-

- বিগত ২৮ মে ২০২৫-এ অনুষ্ঠিত সোনালী ব্যাংক পিএলসি এর অষ্টাদশ বার্ষিক সাধারণ সভার কার্যবিবরণী নিশ্চিতকরণ;
- পরিচালকমন্ডলীর প্রতিবেদন এবং নিরীক্ষকের প্রতিবেদনসহ ২০২৫ সালের ৩১ ডিসেম্বর সমাপ্ত বছরের স্থিতিপত্র এবং লাভ-ক্ষতির হিসাব গ্রহণ, বিবেচনা ও অনুমোদন;
- ৩১ ডিসেম্বর ২০২৫ সমাপ্ত বছরের লভ্যাংশ ঘোষণা;
- ব্যাংকের পরবর্তী বার্ষিক সাধারণ সভা অনুষ্ঠিত হওয়া পর্যন্ত নিরীক্ষক নিয়োগ এবং তাদের পারিশ্রমিক নির্ধারণ;
- সোনালী ব্যাংক পিএলসি এর ২০২৬ সালের Corporate Governance Code Compliance এর উপর সনদ প্রাপ্তির লক্ষ্যে অডিট ফর্ম নিয়োগ;
- পরিচালকমন্ডলী অবসর গ্রহণ ও পুনর্নির্বাচন; এবং
- সভার সভাপতির অনুমোদনক্রমে অন্য যে কোনো বিষয়।

ব্যাংকের সম্মানিত শেয়ারহোল্ডারগণকে উক্ত সভায় অংশগ্রহণ করার জন্য অনুরোধ জানানো যাচ্ছে।

পরিচালনা পর্ষদের আদেশক্রমে
মোঃ মাহতাব হোসেন
কোম্পানি সেক্রেটারি

● Bangladesh are still searching for their first home Test win against Pakistan after eight matches. Their best result came in Khulna in 2015, when a 312-run opening stand between Tamim Iqbal and Imrul Kayes helped secure a draw. Bangladesh lost the other seven home Tests against Pakistan.

“We have brought a well-rounded 16-man squad that can play in most conditions.... and now it is about playing ten days of good cricket.”

Shan Masood
Pakistan skipper

- Bangladesh's only two wins in 15 Tests against Pakistan came in Rawalpindi in 2024, where they sealed victories by 10 wickets and six wickets, respectively.
- Mominul Haque is nearing a major milestone, needing 141 more runs to become only the third Bangladesh batter after Mushfiqur Rahim and Tamim Iqbal to reach 5,000 Test runs.
- Pakistan spinner Noman Ali is also closing in on a landmark, requiring three more wickets to complete 100 Test wickets.



Bangladesh Test captain Najmul Hossain Shanto and his Pakistan counterpart Shan Masood pose with the trophy in Mirpur on Thursday ahead of their two-match Test series. Part of the current World Test Championship (WTC) cycle, Shanto and Co will take on the visitors in the first match, beginning today at the Sher-e-Bangla National Cricket Stadium. Focus will be on the pacers of the two sides, as it was the fast bowlers who starred during the Tigers' historic 2-0 series win in Rawalpindi when they played at the home of the opponents in 2024.

PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED

IOC lifts ban on Belarus but Russia still barred

AFP, Lausanne

The International Olympic Committee (IOC) on Thursday lifted restrictions on Belarusian athletes competing in the Olympics, while Russian athletes remain barred.

Following Russia's 2022 invasion of Ukraine, both countries' athletes had been banned from international competition, though some competed as neutrals. Russians can still participate only individually, under a neutral flag, and if they have not actively supported the conflict.

The IOC also emphasised that athletes should not be penalised for their governments' actions, including war involvement. The decision allows independent federations to implement the change and paves the way for a Belarusian delegation to compete at the 2028 Los Angeles Olympics with full representation in the opening ceremony and medal table.

Belarusians previously competed as "Individual Neutral Athletes" in Paris 2024 and Milan-Cortina 2026, alongside Russians, stripped of national symbols. The IOC noted that Russia's situation differs due to ROC's suspension since 2023 over control of Ukrainian regions and ongoing doping concerns.

Shanto calls for better first-innings output

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh Test captain Najmul Hossain Shanto stressed the need for stronger first-innings totals ahead of the Pakistan Test series starting on Friday in Mirpur, as the Tigers look for their first win of the current Test cycle after two matches.

The hosts have laid out a grassy track, and the wicket is expected to be sporting in nature. Shanto believes such wickets suit his side, and that the batting unit is settled. Bangladesh have a mix of youth and experience, with players like Mushfiqur Rahim and Mominul Haque bolstering the middle order.

"I hope it will be a good wicket. If you look at our team now, the bowling attack is experienced, and we have quite a few batsmen playing this format for a long time," he said, adding that the batters and bowlers are capable of adjusting to changing conditions in Mirpur.

"In Test cricket especially, I think the batsmen are settled; we have played several series together. So, in terms of experience, I would say it's a good team. Whatever the wicket is like, we have good pacers and good spinners on both ends. I think having a proper sporting wicket is good for our team."

In Tests, first-innings scores are often indicative of how a match will unfold. With batting becoming increasingly

“In the last [WTC] cycle, we finished seventh, which was a good achievement. This time, our target will be to finish fourth or fifth. We have challenging away tours ahead, like Australia and South Africa, so the home series will be very important for us.”

Najmul Hossain Shanto
Bangladesh skipper

difficult in the third and fourth innings on wearing pitches, strong first-innings totals remain a key metric for success. Despite their experience, Bangladesh have often struggled in home conditions. After two tremendous wins in Rawalpindi in August 2024, they produced first-innings scores of 106 and 159 against South Africa in Dhaka and Chattogram respectively in October.

Bangladesh's average first-innings

score at home over the last two years under Shanto stands at 327.2, though that figure was boosted by totals above 400 and 500 against Zimbabwe and Ireland. The Tigers, in fact, fared better away from home in the last Test cycle, with three of their four wins coming overseas. Shanto believes better first-innings performances can improve their home record as Bangladesh now tailor conditions according to opponents' strengths.

"Certainly, the pace bowlers will help me as an extra asset because they have improved significantly in terms of skill and are bowling well in any conditions now... Personally, as a batsman, what I want from the team is that we always play good cricket in the first innings. If we can take up this challenge properly, I think this cycle will go even better," the Test skipper added.

Bangladesh's Test players, however, continue to face the challenge of returning to red-ball cricket after long gaps between matches. "It is difficult, absolutely... But it is very good that they at least got the chance to play one four-day match," said Shanto.

The onus will now be on the batters to deliver after the long break. "I would say they have prepared well for that specific role, and I firmly believe they will be able to play their best cricket."

BCB probes BPL corruption links, suspends five

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) yesterday suspended five individuals, including a player, team official, franchise owner and participant, for breaching various provisions of the ICC Anti-Corruption Code for Participants linked to the last edition of the Bangladesh Premier League (BPL).

The charges stem from investigations conducted by the BCB Integrity Unit into alleged corrupt conduct, betting activities, failures to cooperate with anti-corruption investigations, and obstruction of investigations.

Those charged are Md Labur Rahman (team manager of Chattogram Royals), Towhidul Haque Towhid (franchise co-owner), Amit Mojumder (domestic cricketer) and Rezwana Kabir Siddique (team manager).

Labur and Towhidul have been accused under Article 2.4.6 for allegedly failing or refusing to cooperate with an investigation, including non-compliance with a Demand Notice issued under the Code.

They have also been charged under Article 2.4.7 for allegedly obstructing or delaying an anti-corruption investigation through the concealment, deletion or destruction of relevant communications and information.

Meanwhile, cricketer Amit Mojumder and team manager Rezwana have both been charged under Article 2.2.1, which relates to placing, accepting or entering into bets connected to cricket matches.

"The charged individuals have been provisionally suspended and given 14 days from receipt of the Notices of Charge to respond to the allegations," the board said in a statement.

"BCB will not make any further comment in respect of these matters at this stage," it added.

Meanwhile, the board also issued an Exclusion Order against Saminur Rahman under the BCB Excluded Person Policy following an investigation into alleged corrupt activities linked to the ninth, 10th and 11th editions of the BPL.

The investigation reportedly uncovered alleged betting-related activities, corrupt approaches to players and agents, communications with individuals associated with domestic and international betting and corruption networks, and alleged involvement in facilitating corrupt conduct in cricket matches.

BCB stated that after receiving a Notice of Intended Exclusion Order, Saminur waived his right to respond under the policy and accepted the imposition of the order.

Although Amit was provisionally suspended on Thursday, he featured in a Dhaka Premier Division Cricket League match for Rugganj Tigers against Gazi Group on the same day at BKSP-4.



No BPL better than a poor one: Tamim

STAR SPORTS DESK

Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) ad hoc committee president Tamim Iqbal has issued a stern critique of the Bangladesh Premier League (BPL), labeling the deliberate circumvention of tournament regulations as a "crime". Tamim, alongside current BPL governing council chairman Fahim Sinha, addressed the media on Thursday following revelations over the mismanagement of last season's tournament. Prioritizing national and institutional integrity over a "patchwork" tournament, Tamim demanded strict accountability for financial irregularities and mismanagement.

** Tamim prefers cancelling the BPL over hosting poorly organised editions that damage the BCB and Bangladesh's international image.

** He categorised the intentional violation of board rules – such as accepting insufficient bank guarantees – as a "crime" rather than a simple mistake.

** Fahim, meanwhile, revealed two franchises – Sylhet Titans and Noakhali Express – participated without formal agreements or meeting BCB's Letter of Intent criteria.

** Fahim also mentioned BCB incurred losses of Tk 14-16 crore in the previous edition of BPL due to mismanagement.

** Tamim insists that both the defaulting franchises and the board officials who approved their participation must be held responsible for the resulting financial strain on the BCB.

34 DAYS TO GO



Egypt's historic World Cup debut

Egypt became the first African team to participate in a FIFA World Cup. After overcoming the qualifiers, they earned a ticket to the 1934 tournament in Italy. In that knockout-only World Cup, they played just one match, losing 4-2 to Hungary in the round of 16.

** Visit The Daily Star's website to also read: 'In the ranks of legends: Forlan, the Jabulani ball magician'



PSG march into final again

PSG turned the site of their maiden Champions League triumph into a launchpad for yet another final, as the holders sealed a 6-5 aggregate semifinal win over Bayern Munich following a 1-1 second-leg draw at Allianz Arena on Wednesday. Luis Enrique's side will face Arsenal in the final in Budapest on May 30.

● PSG are the first French side to reach three different European Cup/Champions League finals (2020, 2025, and 2026).

● PSG's 44 goals in 2025-26 are second most by a team in a single Champions League campaign, behind Barcelona's 45 in 1999-00.

● Khvicha Kvaratskhelia's assist for Ousmane Dembele made him the first player in Champions League history to score or assist in seven straight knockout-stage games in a single campaign. The only players to do so in six consecutive games are Kaka (2006-07), Edin Dzeko (2017-

18), and Dembele (2024-25).

● Harry Kane's 94th-minute equaliser came too late for Bayern, but made him only the second player to score in six consecutive Champions League knockout appearances after Cristiano Ronaldo (April 2012-April 2013).



Three BNP polls pledges now under social safety net

Family Card programme to get Tk 12,500cr

REJAUL KARIM BYRON

The Farmers' Card, monthly honorariums for July victims, and allowances for mosque and other religious institution workers will be part of social safety net programmes from next fiscal year, as the BNP-led government forges ahead with its election pledges despite a tight fiscal space.

About Tk 13,562 crore will be earmarked for the flagship Family Card and Farmers' Card programmes, as per the decisions of yesterday's meeting of the cabinet committee on social safety net.

The lion's share will go towards the much-publicised Family Card programme: about Tk 12,500 crore.

The social welfare ministry, the implementing agency of the programme, however, sought Tk 13,740 crore.

Some 1 crore households will be surveyed in fiscal 2026-27 and 41 lakh beneficiaries will be selected.

Those selected for Family Cards cannot be beneficiaries of other social safety net programmes, as per the decisions of yesterday's meeting of the cabinet committee on social safety net.

To prevent duplication of beneficiaries, an effective database will be developed, containing the names, addresses and contact information of beneficiaries.

About Tk 1,062 crore will go towards the distribution of

SEE PAGE 8 COL 4



Mousumi carries her 11-month-old daughter Anika to the ICU on a wheelchair at the DNCC Covid Dedicated Hospital yesterday. Admitted with measles on May 3, Anika was moved from the general ward after her condition worsened. Her father, Jahangir, said Mousumi had to use the wheelchair after her blood pressure suddenly dropped from stress over the child's condition, while doctors advised the wheelchair to ensure Anika's safety.

PHOTO: MEHEDI HASAN

Seven-day holiday for Eid-ul-Azha

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government yesterday announced a seven day holiday for the upcoming Eid-ul-Azha.

The decision was made at a cabinet meeting last night, chaired by Prime Minister Tarique Rahman, according to a press release from the Cabinet Division.

People will enjoy the holiday from May 25 to 31. However, the weekly holiday on Saturday, May 23, has been cancelled. Offices will remain open on Sunday, May 24, as usual.

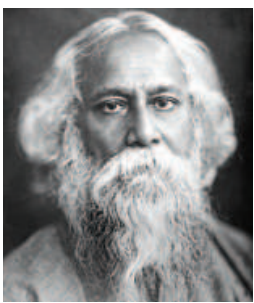
Meeting sources said the government fixed a longer holiday than usual this time to ensure that people across the country can travel to and from their expected destinations comfortably and without disruption during Eid.

According to the tentative date in the government calendar, the festival is scheduled to be celebrated on May 28, although the final date will depend on the moon sighting.

The cabinet also approved the draft of National Public Toilet Policy 2026, which proposes separate public

SEE PAGE 8 COL 4

Tagore's 165th birth anniv today



STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Today marks the 165th birth anniversary of Rabindranath Tagore, the towering figure whose literary genius redefined Bangla literature, music, and the cultural identity of the Indian subcontinent through his embrace of contextual modernism.

Tagore was born on 25 Baishakh, 1268, in the Bangla calendar (May 7, 1861) at the Jorasanko mansion in Kolkata.

A poet, philosopher, playwright, and painter, Tagore remains one of the most influential cultural figures of South Asia.

In 1913, he became the first Asian to be awarded the Nobel Prize in Literature for Gitanjali, a collection of deeply spiritual and lyrical poems that brought him

SEE PAGE 8 COL 6

Most entering secondary school lack basic skills

Study finds alarming weaknesses in Bangla, mathematics among Grade 5 students

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Children in Bangladesh are entering secondary school without mastering basic foundational skills, with a staggering 91 percent of Grade 5 students in mathematics and 65

"novice-level students" as those unable to answer even half of the Grade 5 questions correctly.

Several working and policy papers prepared as part of the research were also presented.

Despite achieving high enrolment rates, Bangladesh's

foundational skills expected upon completion of primary education.

The paper said the data reveal alarming gaps in foundational skills that persist from primary to secondary education. The 2022 National Student Assessment found that, by the end of primary

"We all know the problems. The real question is how we are solving them... The responsibility lies not only with teachers but also with policymakers, field officials, and the education administration."

Education Minister ANM Ehsanul Hoque Milon



percent in Bangla remaining at the "novice" level, a new study has found.

The study, titled "From Evidence to Action: Strengthening Learning, Inclusion and Innovation in Classrooms in Bangladesh", conducted by UNICEF Bangladesh and the UNICEF Office of Research — Innocenti, was unveiled at a hotel in Dhaka yesterday. It described

secondary education system is facing significant challenges.

According to a working paper titled "Drivers of Learning in Differentiated Classrooms: Lessons from Two Years of Piloting a Differentiated Teaching Intervention in Bangladesh Secondary Schools", the problems begin with students entering secondary school without the

education, half of all students could not read at the expected level, while two-thirds could not perform basic mathematics appropriate for their grade level.

At the start of 2024, UNICEF Bangladesh, in partnership with the Directorate of Secondary and Higher Education, began piloting a new approach to help teachers

SEE PAGE 8 COL 1

Delhi seeks Dhaka's help in repatriation of 'illegals'

THE STATESMAN

Days after the Bharatiya Janata Party's victory in the West Bengal Assembly elections, New Delhi yesterday sought Dhaka's cooperation in expediting the repatriation of alleged undocumented Bangladeshis from India.

The request follows Bangladesh Foreign Minister Khalilur Rahman's remark that Dhaka would take action if pushback incidents occur under the changed political circumstances in West Bengal following the BJP's victory in the state.

Responding to Khalilur's remarks, Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal said the comments must be viewed in a certain context.

"We have seen comments of this nature being made in the last several days. These comments must be seen in the context of the core issue of the repatriation of illegal Bangladeshis from India. This obviously requires cooperation from Bangladesh. Over 2,860 cases of nationality verification are pending

SEE PAGE 8 COL 4

West Bengal assembly dissolved

BJP govt to be sworn in tomorrow as Mamata refuses to step down

- Gunmen kill BJP state leader's political aide; TMC denies involvement
- At least 5 people killed in post-polls violence; vandalism, intimidation reported
- Mamata to challenge polls results in SC alleging massive irregularities

STAR DESK

New Delhi yesterday sought Dhaka's cooperation in expediting the repatriation of alleged undocumented Bangladeshis from India, three days after the BJP swept the West Bengal assembly election.

The request follows Bangladesh Foreign Minister Khalilur Rahman's remark that Dhaka would take action if "push-in" incidents occur under the changed political circumstances in West Bengal.

"Push-in" refers to the practice of Indian authorities pushing suspected undocumented migrants across the India-Bangladesh border into Bangladesh without formal deportation procedures or prior verification by Bangladeshi authorities.

Responding to Khalilur's remark, Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal said the comments must be viewed in a certain context, reports The Statesman, a Kolkata-based English-language daily.

"We have seen comments of this nature over the last

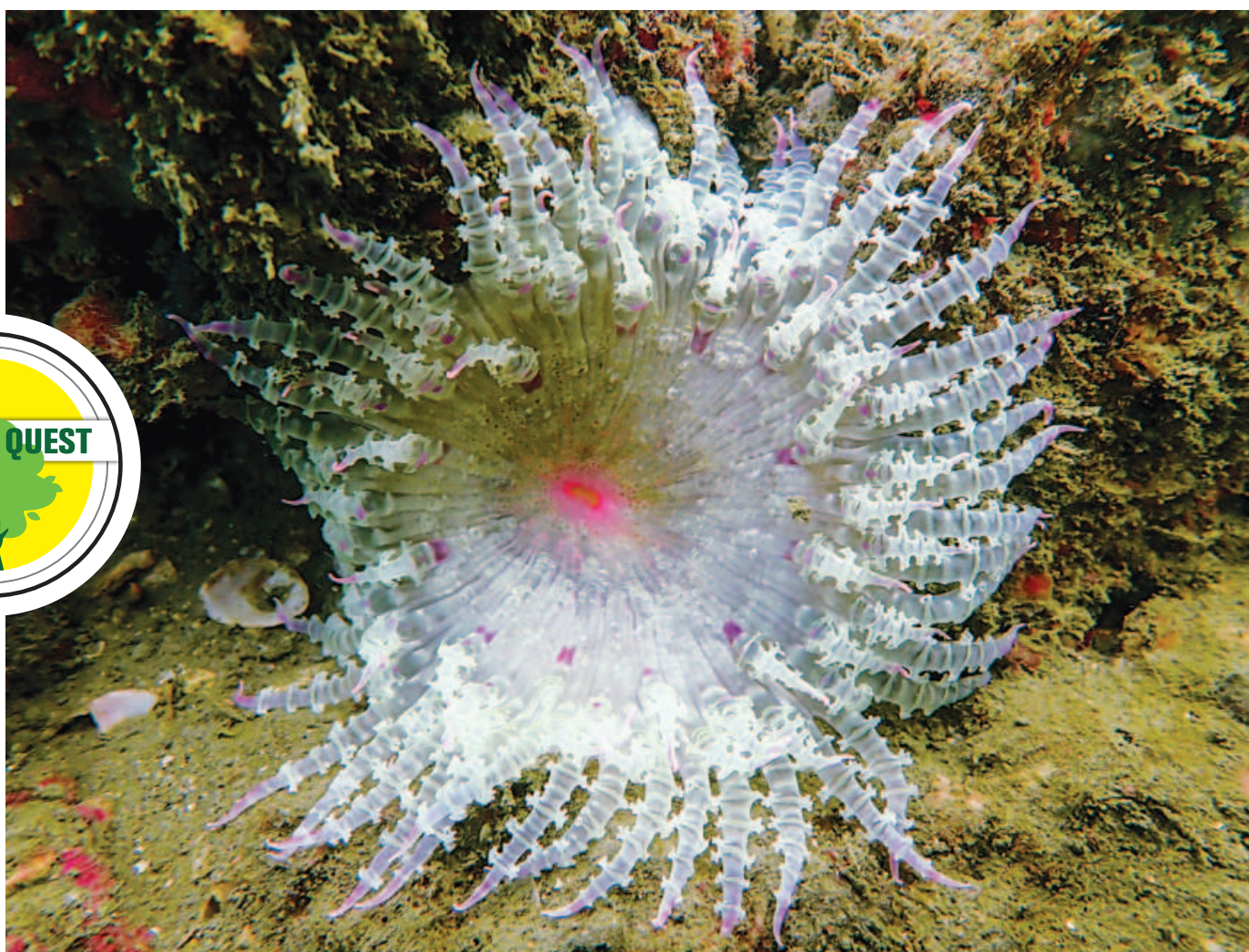
SEE PAGE 2 COL 2

BLOSSOMS OF THE BAY

Clinging to the reef floor, a colourful sea anemone sways its soft, translucent pink-tipped tentacles like a blooming flower in the Bay of Bengal off Saint Martin's Island. Found in tropical and temperate oceans worldwide, sea anemones inhabit coral reefs, rocky crevices, sandy seabeds, and tidal zones.

Though flower-like in appearance, they are carnivorous predators, using venom-filled stinging cells to capture plankton, crustaceans, molluscs, and small fish. Some species form symbiotic relationships with clownfish and algae, creating miniature underwater ecosystems. Sea anemones play an important ecological role by linking reef and seabed food chains while sheltering many marine creatures. Most species have not been individually assessed by the IUCN, though many face threats from ocean warming, pollution, reef destruction, and overcollection for the aquarium trade.

PHOTO: SHARIF SARWAR



Man shot dead, 11-year-old girl injured in Ctg

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Chattogram

A young man was shot dead, and an 11-year-old girl sustained bullet injuries after criminals opened fire in Chattogram city's Rowfabad area last night.

The deceased was identified as Hasan alias Raju, 24, a resident of Raozan upazila in Chattogram, police said.

The incident took place at Shaheed Minar alley in Rowfabad.

Reshmi Akter, 11, a bystander, suffered bullet injuries to her eyes and was admitted to Chattogram Medical College Hospital (CMCH), said Sub Inspector (SI) Nur Alam Ashek, also in charge of the CMCH police outpost.

Bayezid Bostami Police Station Sub-Inspector Shahidul Islam told The Daily Star, "Raju came to Rowfabad from Raozan on May 3 to visit his sister. Around 9:15pm, armed criminals opened fire on Raju, leaving him dead on the spot."

Reshmi, a resident of the area, sustained bullet injuries during the attack, said SI Shahidul.

The attackers quickly fled the scene after the shooting incident, he said.

Later, police recovered Raju's body from the spot, the police official added.

The motive behind the killing is yet to be determined, though police primarily believe the murder may be linked to the recent spree of shootings in Raozan that has left dozens dead.