



Football fans in Dhaka take to the streets in a colourful rally organised by Kisholoy Jubo Sangha yesterday, ahead of the FIFA World Cup kicking off on June 11. Donning the jerseys of their favourite national teams and waving flags of 48 participating countries, supporters turned the capital into a moving mosaic of global football passion. The procession began at Hossaini Dalan Road and ended at TSC of Dhaka University, capturing the city's growing world cup fever.

PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

Unite against anti-democratic elements

Says Fakhrul at discussion

DU CORRESPONDENT

Warning about the rise of a force that does not believe in democracy or people's rights, LGRD Minister Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir yesterday said democratic forces should unite to prevent such elements from gaining strength.

"A power is rising today that does not believe in democracy and human rights. Therefore, democratic forces should unite so that this power cannot raise its head," he said at a commemorative programme at the Jatiya Press Club in memory of late politicians Mahbubol Haque and Mahbubul Alam Tara.

"After the July uprising, we have had the opportunity to return to a democratic process. But since 2024, certain quarters have been conspiring so that democracy does not remain in Bangladesh," said Fakhrul.

"We have formed a government through a democratic electoral process. It is now the responsibility of this government to identify these conspiracies and move forward in the right direction," he added.

He also alleged that there have been long-standing efforts to undermine politics.

"There is always a conspiracy to destroy politics, and those involved are doing so deliberately with planned narratives to disrupt the normal political process," he said.

Fakhrul said the late Mahbubol Haque and Mahbubul Alam Tara were fortunate not to witness what he described as the current decline in political discourse on social media.

"I do not use social media. I do not even have an account, as I have seen it can mislead people and lead to wrong decisions," he said.

Speaking at the programme, BNP Vice Chairman Samsuzzaman Dudu recalled working with Tara in organising Jatiyatabadi Krishak Dal.

He said Tara was involved in student politics through the Student Union and remained active in organisational work.



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Man sued over rape of 14-yr-old girl

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Jamalpur

A case was filed yesterday against a man for allegedly raping a 14-year-old girl in Jamalpur's Sarishabari upazila.

The girl's father filed the case against Ibrahim Hossain, 38, with Sarishabari Police Station, said OC Mohammad Iqbal.

The drive to arrest the accused is underway, he said.

According to the case statement, Ibrahim had allegedly been making unwanted advances on the victim. On Thursday, while the victim was passing by the accused's house, Ibrahim forcibly dragged her inside and raped her.

After the girl went missing for a long time, her relatives and neighbours began searching for her. Eventually, they searched the accused's house and rescued the girl. Sensing their presence, Ibrahim fled the scene. Later, the girl disclosed the incident to her family members, the case statement added.

Rainfall likely in next four days: Met office

BSS, Dhaka

Rainfall is expected to increase across the country over the next four days as the southwest monsoon advances further inland.

According to the Bangladesh Meteorological Department (BMD), a trough extending from West Bengal to the North Bay remains active, while the southwest monsoon is likely to advance up to the Cox's Bazar coast within the next 24 hours.

The weather office said light to moderate rain or thundershowers accompanied by temporary gusty or squally winds and lightning flashes are expected in different parts of the country throughout the forecast period ending June 10.

Rain or thundershowers are likely at a few places in Rangpur, Rajshahi, Dhaka, Mymensingh, Khulna, Barishal, Chattogram and Sylhet divisions today, with moderately heavy falls at places.

The ongoing mild to moderate heatwave affecting Rajshahi, Khulna and Barishal divisions and several districts, including Dhaka, Tangail, Faridpur, Chandpur, Noakhali and Rangamati may subside in some areas as rainfall increases. Day and night temperatures may fall slightly, though discomfort may persist due to increased moisture.

From June 6 to June 7, rainfall is expected to become more widespread, particularly over Khulna, Barishal, Chattogram, Sylhet, Dhaka and Mymensingh divisions, with moderately heavy to heavy falls at places.

Scattered rainfall will continue on June 8, especially in southern and eastern regions.

On June 9, Mymensingh and Sylhet divisions are to experience light to moderate rain or thundershowers and moderately heavy to very heavy rainfall at places. Rainfall is also expected in Rangpur, Dhaka, Rajshahi, Khulna, Barishal and Chattogram divisions on that day.

NATIONAL BUDGET 2026-27

EC likely to get Tk 2,900cr

AHMED DEEPTO

The Election Commission (EC) is likely to get an allocation of around Tk 2,900 crore in the National Budget for the 2026-27 fiscal year for its operations, including holding local government polls.

In 2025-26 fiscal year, the EC was allocated Tk 3,150 crore. Of the amount, around Tk 2,256 crore was spent on the 13th national parliamentary election and referendum held on February 12.

"We demanded over Tk 5,500 crore. We may get a little over Tk 2,900 crore. The final figure will be known on budget day," said Shamsul Hoque Fouzder, EC senior assistant secretary (budget).

Asked whether the EC could hold local government elections with Tk 2,900 crore in the upcoming fiscal year, Election Commissioner Abdur Rahmanel Masud said, "Measures will be taken to ensure the elections are conducted at lower cost. Public money cannot be wasted."

EC officials noted that the demand was made considering the upcoming elections due for upazilas, union parishads, municipalities, city corporations, and

district councils.

"We calculated the likely expenditure for 495 upazilas, 330 municipalities, and 13 city corporations before placing the demand," Fouzder said.

He added that Union Parishad polls cost almost as much as national elections, as those are held in four to five phases.

"Within the remaining four months of



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ongoing fiscal year, the EC may conduct polls to municipalities, city corporations, district councils, and pending upazilas. If held in two phases, more than 250 upazilas could be covered within this allocation," he also said.

BREAKDOWN OF EC'S DEMAND

Of the Tk 5,500 crore sought from the

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When a notification brings a child home

MUN Alert's partnership with Meta helps find missing child in Dhaka

KEERO ADHNAN AHMED

A nine-year-old boy with special needs was rescued in the capital's Mirpur last Sunday after a local pharmacy employee recognised him from a missing child alert on Facebook, a Meta platform.

The rescue marks the first successful recovery under Meta's partnership with MUN Alert, a local emergency broadcast system, demonstrating the effectiveness of targeted social media notifications in helping to locate missing children.

MUN Alert started as a pilot project under the Criminal Investigation Department (CID) on January 13 this year.

Saidul Islam, the pharmacy employee who rescued the child, told The Daily Star, "I suddenly saw a notification at the top of my Messenger that said, 'Find a missing child in your area'. I had never seen a notification like that before. I clicked it and saw a photo of a kid."

About an hour later, he noticed the same child wandering near his shop. He approached the boy, called the police, and handed him over to Pallabi Police Station.

The boy, Abdullah Al Sadib, went missing on Sunday afternoon. After Pallabi police merely took note of his father's complaint without filing a general diary (GD), the boy's tutor, Tania Akter, contacted MUN Alert.

"I heard about MUN Alert's,

system on TV news. When police didn't file a GD or begin searching for the child, I texted them, and they responded immediately," Tania said.

The emergency broadcast system quickly posted an alert on its Facebook page and shared the information with Meta. Within an hour, Meta sent location-based notifications across Facebook, Messenger and Instagram, which led to the child's rescue.

While MUN Alert began successfully sending notifications through Meta apps on Sunday, the broader initiative has struggled since its launch due to bureaucratic red tape and unfulfilled pledges.

MUN Alert joined Meta's missing alert network on May 25, marking International Missing Children's Day, making Bangladesh the first South Asian country to join the network of over 30 countries.

The system uses precise location data to notify users in active search areas without sending disruptive push notifications.

Emily Vacher, director of Trust and Safety at Meta, inaugurated the programme on May 25, describing MUN Alert as "the most inspiring youth-led child protection initiative

to emerge from South Asia".

BUREAUCRATIC HURDLES STALL INITIATIVE

While MUN Alert began successfully sending notifications through Meta apps on Sunday, the broader initiative has struggled since its January 13 launch due to bureaucratic red tape and unfulfilled pledges.

Sadat Rahman, the key initiator of MUN Alert, said a proposed CID "Missing Children Cell" never materialised. He also said the banking sector did not fulfil its commitment to display alerts on ATM and television screens.

At present, the initiative heavily relies on city corporation billboards and social media. The app receives three to four alerts daily and has handled more than 200 cases. However, only 29 children have been recovered so far -- all from Dhaka.

To address these problems, the home ministry issued a guideline on April 12 assigning responsibility for investigating missing children cases and conducting rescue efforts to the Police Headquarters (PHQ). The Community Police Unit was tasked with leading the efforts.

However, Sadat and police sources said efforts to improve coordination and streamline the service have made little progress despite several meetings between the MUN Alert team and PHQ officials.

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FY 2026-27

NCP unveils Tk 8.52 lakh crore 'shadow budget'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

National Citizen Party (NCP) leaders, while unveiling their shadow budget for the upcoming fiscal year yesterday, said they do not want rhetoric-heavy, numbers-based, or superficial budgets that exist only on paper.

"Every single penny allocated must be used for the public, ensuring that the tangible benefits of the budget reach citizens," NCP Chief Organiser (South) and lawmaker Hasnat Abdullah said at the programme in Banglamotor.

He said the shadow budget, aimed at an equitable and discrimination-free economy, was prepared after more than two months of consultations with various stakeholders.

He added that the current government



The NCP said revenue would be increased mainly by expanding the tax base rather than raising pressure on lower and middle-income groups.

has inherited an economy in deep crisis from the Awami League, with classified loans exceeding 30 percent of total loans and over \$12 billion spent annually on fuel imports.

NCP's Shadow Budget Committee Chief and lawmaker Atiq Mujahid presented a Tk 8,52,157 crore shadow budget for FY 2026-27, outlining an alternative fiscal plan focused on reform, job creation, investment, and fiscal discipline.

According to the proposal, the Annual Development Programme would be Tk 2,52,667 crore.

The highest allocation is proposed for education and technology at Tk 1,24,425 crore. Other allocations include Tk 52,338 crore for health, Tk 87,567 crore for public administration,

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A squirrel perches on a tree and digs into a pomegranate at the residence of the Rajshahi College principal yesterday. The number of squirrels in Rajshahi city has visibly grown, with many foraging in recreational areas and feeding on discarded leftovers, coconuts, mangoes, litchis, guavas, and other fruits.

PHOTO: AZAHAR UDDIN