



Wider reforms key to media commission's success

Speakers say at MRDI discussion

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

An independent media commission may help restore trust in Bangladesh's media sector, but broader reforms to ensure transparency, accountability and journalist protection will be crucial to its success, speakers said yesterday.

At a discussion titled "Media Commission: Expectations from the Government" at The Daily Star Centre in the capital, they warned that the proposed commission must not become another dormant body, as the sector continues to grapple with weak regulation, opaque ownership structures, flawed circulation and TRP measurement systems, misinformation and poor wage practices.

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Heavy excavators mounted on barges are lifting soil and sand from the Turag river in the Ramchandrapur area of Dhaka. Local influentials are reportedly extracting sand illegally from the riverbed to sell to brick kilns, contributing to significant environmental degradation and riverbank erosion. The photo was taken yesterday morning.

PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON

Won't give govt 'much time'

Says Jamaat chief over implementation of the July charter

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Jamaat-e-Islami Ameer Shafiqur Rahman yesterday warned that the opposition alliance would not give the government much time to implement the public mandate delivered through the July charter referendum.

Addressing a rally organised by the 11-party alliance at Laldighi Maidan in Chattogram, Shafiqur, also leader of the opposition in parliament, said the government was constitutionally bound to honour the referendum verdict. "A government that rejects the public mandate ceases to be a government of the people," he added.

Shafiqur acknowledged that the BNP government came to power securing 51 percent of the vote, but said it was "equally undeniable that 71 percent of the population voted in favour of implementing the July charter in the referendum."



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'Ad-din followed me around with crores of taka'

Says health minister; hospital denies claim

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Health and Family Welfare Minister Sardar Md Sakhawat Husain yesterday alleged that the authorities of Ad-din Medical College Hospital had attempted to bribe him.

"[People from] Ad-din hospital followed me around with crores of taka... I was not tempted. The prime minister told me, 'Whatever action you take, you will have my full support.' I have therefore cancelled the hospital's licence."

Speaking at a financial aid distribution programme in the upazila parishad auditorium of Narsingdi's Monohardi upazila, he also criticised leaders of Jamaat-e-Islami for speaking in support of the hospital.

"Jamaat leaders claim that injustice has been done [by cancelling the licence]. This hospital deceives people with low charges They are responsible for the deaths of six babies, yet Jamaat is now speaking in their defence.

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Rape victim arrested in trafficking case

2 held in rape case, one confesses

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Bogura

A rape victim was arrested in a human trafficking case on Wednesday and is undergoing treatment under police custody in Bogura.

According to the human trafficking case statement, the 21-year-old woman, Anjum* (not her real name), who is both the rape victim and an accused in the trafficking case, had been acquainted with a woman, Rima* (not her real name), for around eight months.

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Interim US-Iran deal will be signed today

Says Trump; Iran questions timing; reports say both sides agree on text for a framework of peace pact

Initial deal will reopen Hormuz; Iran says it will charge for services

Nuclear talks will be held later, with Iran abandoning nuke ambition

US to release billions of dollars in frozen assets, waive sanctions

Israel says it won't be party to deal, insists Lebanon separate issue

REUTERS, Dubai, Washington

US President Donald Trump and mediator Pakistan yesterday said an initial deal to end the war in the Middle East would be signed today, although Iran denied the signing would take place so soon.

Pakistani Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif said the two sides had agreed on a framework for a peace deal and that Islamabad

was preparing for an electronic signing today, to be followed by technical-level talks next week.

"The Deal is scheduled to get signed tomorrow, and immediately after it is signed, the Hormuz Strait is OPEN TO ALL," Trump said in a post on his Truth Social platform yesterday.

Earlier, Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesperson Esmail Baghaei cautioned

commenting on the timing of the signing.

"We will have to wait and see about the exact date of the signing of the memorandum of understanding, although it will not be tomorrow," state media quoted Baghaei as saying.

"The possibility of this happening in the coming days cannot be ruled out. However,

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Jamaat seeks clarification on new Indian envoy's remark

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Jamaat-e-Islami Ameer and Leader of the Opposition Shafiqur Rahman has urged the government to seek clarification from newly appointed Indian High Commissioner Dinesh Trivedi over his reported remark about "India and Bangladesh becoming one".

In a post shared on his verified Facebook page at 12:06pm yesterday, Shafiqur said the envoy's comment had come to his attention following his arrival in Bangladesh.

"We believe our government should seek clarification from him regarding what he meant

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Some remarks regarding the allegations against Nabil Group

The various allegations made in the statements of the Hon'ble Home Minister regarding Nabil Group during the discussion on Islami Bank Bangladesh PLC in the budget session of the Jatiya Sangsad on 9 June 2026 are false, baseless and exaggerated.

Several of the facts presented in Parliament are not consistent with Nabil Group's audited financial statements, banking records and the documents of the relevant regulatory authorities. These statements not only create confusion in the public mind but also damage the long-standing reputation and business interests of an established industrial group.

In this regard, Kbd. Md. Aminul Islam, Managing Director & CEO of Nabil Group of Industries, yesterday submitted a detailed petition to the Hon'ble Prime Minister. Copies have also been submitted to the Hon'ble Finance Minister, the Hon'ble Home Minister and the Governor of Bangladesh Bank. A request has also been made to the Hon'ble Speaker of the Jatiya Sangsad to expunge the false and baseless information raised about Nabil Group from the parliamentary records.

Regarding the allegation of Tk. 700 crore LC and non-repayment:

The statement made by the Hon'ble Home Minister that Nabil Group availed LC facilities of Tk. 700 crore from Islami Bank after 5 August 2024 is not consistent with actual facts and banking records. In reality, from 5 August 2024 until today, Nabil Group has opened Letters of Credit (LCs) worth a total of Tk. 7,181 crore for the purpose of importing essential consumer goods, industrial raw materials and other trading products. Following international trade and banking rules and regulations, bills amounting to Tk. 5,733 crore against these LCs have already been duly paid. The remaining sight and accepted bills of Tk. 1,448 crore are being paid regularly and on time according to their respective due dates. All these transactions have been and are being conducted in accordance with international commercial practices, banking regulations and the guidelines of the relevant regulatory authorities.

Regarding the allegation of Tk. 16,000 crore in bank liabilities:

The information that has been circulated claiming Nabil Group's total bank liability is Tk. 16,000 crore is also false and baseless. According to audited financial reports, as of June 2025, the Group's total bank liability was Tk. 5,868 crore. In contrast, this liability stood at Tk. 7,864 crore in August 2024. That is, within just one year, Nabil Group has reduced its bank debt by over Tk. 2,000 crore - a clear reflection of the Group's financial discipline, accountability and loan repayment capacity. Nabil Group has never defaulted on any bank loan, and all banking activities are carried out in accordance with the guidelines of Bangladesh Bank and prevailing banking regulations.

Regarding the allegation of money going to an election fund:

Nabil Group also protests the insinuation made in Parliament that the Group's money was used for a political party's election fund. The Group, one of the country's top industrial groups, is a completely apolitical business entity and has

no affiliation with any political party.

There is no proven allegation of loan misappropriation, money laundering or fraud against Nabil Group or its associate companies. The Managing Director of the establishment, along with his family members, resides in Bangladesh, and they have no illegal or secret assets abroad.

Our respectful submission:

a) Nabil Group has been conducting business for the past two decades in agriculture, industry, food products, transport, import-export and consumer goods. According to the National Board of Revenue, Nabil Group is one of the top five consumer goods importers in the country for two consecutive years. In fiscal year 2023-24, the Group's total imports amounted to USD 1.21 billion.

b) Nabil Group directly employs over 25,000 people and indirectly supports the livelihoods of more than 200,000 people. Our massive fixed investment proves our long-term commitment to Bangladesh. As part of our social responsibility, Nabil Group works for the underprivileged communities in the northern region of the country. 80% of our investment is in the northern region, contributing to large-scale employment and improvement of living standards.

c) Despite the political change in August 2024, Nabil Group and the family members, relatives and associates of its officials have remained in the country. They continue to play an effective role in the economic development of Bangladesh. The Managing Director of Nabil Group, along with his wife, son, daughter, parents and all family members, resides in Rajshahi. His children also study in Rajshahi. None of them have any assets abroad.

d) Nabil Group has never defaulted on any bank loan. Our banking relationships are based on mutual trust, transparency and professional discipline. Nabil Group has not bought any TV channel using bank loans.

e) Nabil Group regularly provides various donations to help the destitute, helpless and low-income people of society, while also contributing to the improvement of their living standards. In the Group's industrial park, employment has been arranged for more than 1,500 widows and underprivileged women. Additionally, Nabil Group contributes to the sports sector. This year, Rajshahi Warriors, owned by Nabil Group, became champions of the Bangladesh Premier Cricket League, and Rajshahi Stars FC, owned by Nabil Group, became champions of the Bangladesh Women's Premier Football League. Rajshahi Stars FC is going to participate as the only team from Bangladesh in the Asian Women's Football Club competition for the first time.

Nabil Group believes that when allegations are raised against any individual or institution, the ultimate standard should be facts, documents and evidence - not assumptions, rumours or political statements. If any person or institution is defamed through parliamentary statements without proper verification of facts, it is harmful not only to the concerned institution but also to the overall business and investment climate. Therefore, Nabil Group calls for a transparent, fact-based and impartial inquiry through Bangladesh Bank or any other independent and neutral authority.

We believe that correct information and transparency are the best answers to any false accusation. Nabil Group remains committed to working for the people of this country as a partner in all developmental and positive initiatives of the government.