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‘Mother Teresa’ of Sherpur

**Razia Samad Dahlia, 83, continues her
lifelong mission of social service**

SAHIDUL ISLAM NIRAB, from Sherpur

Even at 83, Razia Samad Dahlia, a veteran social worker who has spent decades serving the poor, the sick and the vulnerable, shows little sign of slowing down.

Affectionately known as “Dahlia Khalamoni”, she has helped establish a diabetic hospital, launch a heart foundation, support underprivileged students, arrange treatment for poor patients, and provide shelter to abandoned children in Sherpur.

For her years of selfless service, local residents have come to call her

Hossain Thandu, general secretary of the Sherpur Diabetic Association.

As the founding president of the Sherpur district chapter of the Red Crescent Society, Dahlia has been regularly arranging blood donations for patients and facilitating treatment by specialist physicians.

She has also been supporting women victims of violence and financially disadvantaged students.

Dahlia has played an important role in promoting cultural and social activities in the region, having served in leadership positions in several civic and voluntary organisations.



“Sherpur’s Mother Teresa”.

Born on September 23, 1943, in Sherpur town, Dahlia is the daughter of Khan Bahadur Fazlur Rahman, a former chief whip of undivided Bengal.

After her husband, engineer Abdus Samad, died in 1981, she left her teaching career in Dhaka and returned to Sherpur in 1990 to devote herself fully to social work.

Over the years, she has spent much of her personal wealth and inherited property on humanitarian causes, including the establishment of educational and healthcare institutions for disadvantaged communities.

One of her most significant initiatives is the Sherpur Diabetic Centre, established in 1997 and later upgraded into a hospital. The institution provides interest-free loans and financial support to low-income patients, and helps them buy insulin.

“She is a rare individual who has dedicated both her life and resources to the welfare of others,” said Imam

She is the founding president of the National Rabindra Sangeet Sammilan Parishad’s Sherpur district unit. She also helped Patabahar Khelaghar Asor, a children’s organisation, construct a permanent building to replace its former dilapidated structure alongside organising cultural festivals.

Through the women’s organisation Ujjayini, she has been facilitating free eye surgeries for poor patients with support from the Khan Bahadur Fazlur Rahman Foundation.

Her humanitarian work has often gone beyond conventional charity.

Two decades ago, she rescued a Garo woman suffering from leprosy after she had been abandoned by her family. Dahlia arranged her treatment and rehabilitation, helping her return to normal life.

She has also provided shelter and educational opportunities to orphaned and abandoned children.

Two girls she rescued from the streets in the early 1990s eventually completed their education and

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Participants at a discussion at The Daily Star Centre in the capital yesterday. The event, titled “Unlocking Bangladesh Delta Plan: Aligning National Priorities for a Resilient and Prosperous Future”, was jointly organised by RedOrange, The Daily Star, and the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands in Bangladesh.

PHOTO: STAR

‘Climate change may cost up to 9% of GDP by 2050’

Speakers urge stronger Delta Plan implementation

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Climate change could have significant economic consequences for Bangladesh by 2050, with projections indicating a potential annual GDP loss of 2-9 percent, according to a paper presented at a programme yesterday.

The paper also projected a 12-17 percent decline in rice production and a 12-61 percent decline in wheat production, said Mahfuz Kabir, research director at the Bangladesh Institute of International and Strategic Studies.

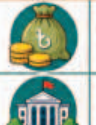
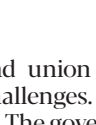
He also said a third of the country’s power plants may need to relocate over the next decade to avoid flooding.

The event, titled “Unlocking Bangladesh Delta Plan: Aligning National Priorities for a Resilient and Prosperous Future”, was jointly organised by RedOrange, The Daily Star, and the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands in Bangladesh at The Daily Star Centre in Dhaka.

Mahfuz said Bangladesh is one of the world’s most dynamic deltas, facing major risks including cyclones, river erosion, salinity intrusion, and climate-induced migration.

He said the central vision of the Bangladesh Delta Plan is to build a climate-resilient and prosperous delta, covering six ecological hotspots, including the coastal areas, the Barind tract, and the Haor regions.

He proposed several key recommendations, including establishing a High-Level Delta Implementation and Coordination Council under the Prime Minister’s Office, introducing Delta tagging in the Annual Development Programme to track project impacts, and strengthening local government institutions such as city corporations

AT A GLANCE		
	Rice output may fall	12-17%
	Wheat output may drop	12-61%
	A third of power plants may need relocation	
RECOMMENDATIONS		
	Secure long-term Delta Plan funding	
	Strengthen city corporations, union parishads	
	Disclose feasibility studies, impact assessments early	

and union parishads to manage local climate challenges.

The government approved the Delta Plan 2100 on September 4, 2018, to secure the country’s water resources and mitigate the potential impacts of climate change and natural disasters.

The plan represents a broad, long-term vision that anticipates changes and identifies necessary

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Govt’s ‘wrong decisions’ push economy to brink: Shafiqur

UNB, Dhaka

Leader of the Opposition and Jamaat-e-Islami Ameer Shafiqur Rahman yesterday alleged that some “wrong and shortsighted” decisions of the government have put the country’s economy at risk of collapse.

Speaking at a meeting of the party’s Central Working Committee, he particularly criticised the government’s decision regarding the banking sector.

“When Islami Bank, which had been devastated during the fascist era, was just beginning to recover, the government made a suicidal decision to hand over the bank back to the cohorts of fascism,” the Jamaat chief said.

“We believe this decision will destroy the country’s economy from the roots,” he added.

He, however, said it is unfortunate that the current government is making a self-destructive and shortsighted attempt to make people forget the spirit of July 2024.

“The prime minister campaigned for a ‘Yes’ vote in the referendum but later trampled on the referendum verdict, effectively betraying the nation. This decision will ultimately backfire on the government,” he said.

The opposition leader alleged

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FROM THE JS GALLERY

External debt now \$78.22b Says finance minister



STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Finance Minister Amir Khosru Mahmud Chowdhury told parliament yesterday that Bangladesh’s total external debt stood at US\$ 78.22 billion as of March this year.

Of this, 61.97 percent was concessional, he said while responding to a question from MP Mustafizur Rahman Babul during the question-answer session.

The finance minister, in his scripted answer,

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Four mobile operators owe Tk 13,144cr Says telecom minister

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The country’s four mobile operators owe a total of Tk 13,144 crore in outstanding revenue, Post and Telecommunications Minister Faqir Mahbub Anam told parliament yesterday.

Replying to a question from MP Lutfor Rahman during the question-answer session presided over by Speaker Hafiz Uddin Ahmad, the minister said Teletalk

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Ensure legal protection for the marginalised Demand speakers at seminar

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Millions of people from marginalised communities in Bangladesh continue to face exclusion due to the absence of specific legislation prohibiting discrimination and untouchability, said rights groups at a seminar yesterday.

Despite constitutional guarantees of equality, Bangladesh still lacks a specific law to address social discrimination and untouchability, leaving millions without effective legal remedies, they said, calling for a comprehensive anti-discrimination law.

The seminar, titled “Call for Speedy Enactment of the Law to Eliminate Inequality in the National Dialogue”, was organised by Citizens’ Initiative and Manusher Jonno Foundation (MJF), in collaboration with the Bangladesh Dalit and Excluded Rights Movement (BDERM) and the Bangladesh Legal Aid and Services Trust (BLAST), at a city hotel.

Presenting the keynote paper, Zakir Hossain, chief executive of Nagorik Uddyog, said constitutional commitments to equality and social justice have yet to translate into meaningful protections for marginalised communities.

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Measles and Dengue Update



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