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6.2cr people one shock away from poverty: WB

Prolonged economic slowdown, inflation, energy shortages leave them on the brink

REJAUL KARIM BYRON *and* **REFAYET ULLAH MIRDHA**

Nearly 6.2 crore people in Bangladesh are currently living just one economic shock away from falling below the poverty line, the World Bank has warned, as persistently high inflation and severe energy shortages reverse years of hard-won economic gains.

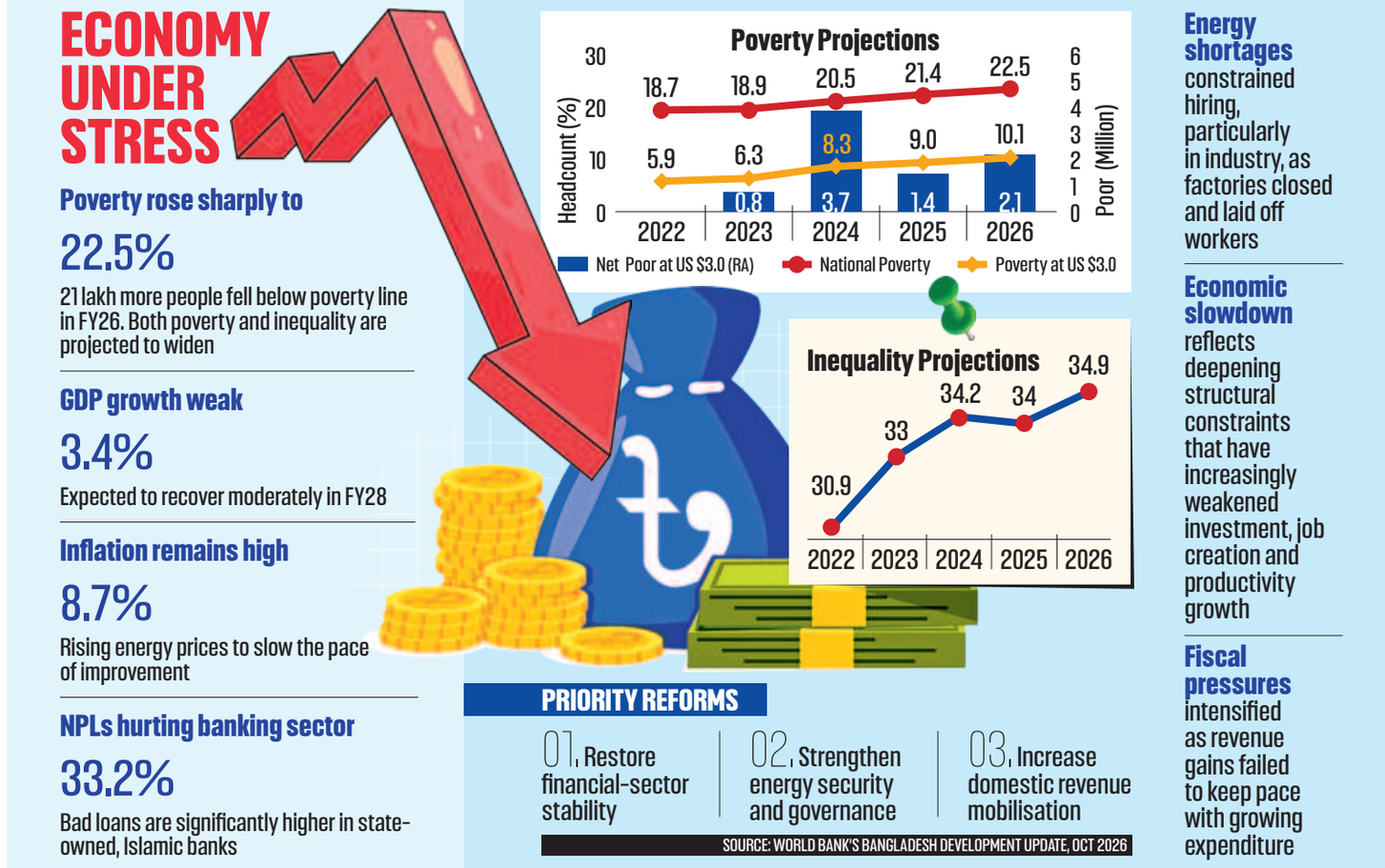
A prolonged slowdown is eroding household welfare through weak labour demand and persistent inflation, pushing national poverty to an estimated 22.5 percent in 2026 from 18.7 percent in 2022, according to the World Bank's latest Bangladesh Development Update, released yesterday. Extreme poverty, measured at the $3-a-day international line, rose from 5.9 percent to an estimated 10.1 percent over the same period.

The economic strain is largely driven by a four-year inflationary surge that has systematically squeezed household purchasing power. This is compounded by acute energy shortages that have curtailed business operating hours, forced factory closures, and stalled job creation, particularly within the country's industrial sectors.

These dual pressures are unravelling decades of poverty reduction. Poverty is estimated to have increased by 1.1 percentage points in the 2026 fiscal year alone, adding an estimated 21 lakh people to the poverty rolls since FY25. Job creation has stalled broadly, with women absorbing a disproportionate share of recent job losses.

However, the absence of Labour Force Survey data since 2025 has limited a full assessment of labour market conditions and their scale, the World Bank said, even as pressures fall on a population with little capacity to absorb them.

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Time for urgent, bold reforms

Says the World Bank, urges prioritising changes in banking revenue, energy sectors

REJAUL KARIM BYRON *and* **REFAYET ULLAH MIRDHA**

Bangladesh needs urgent and bold reforms in the financial, energy and revenue sectors to arrest the economic slowdown, restore investor confidence and create jobs, said the World Bank yesterday.

Separation of tax policymaking from tax administration is a key priority to enable tax policies that are designed more strategically and implemented more effectively, the WB said.

"The time to act is now," said Jean Pesme, the WB's country director for Bangladesh and Bhutan, at the launch of the 'Bangladesh Development Update' report at the multilateral lender's office in Dhaka.

Addressing Bangladesh's structural growth challenges requires a focused reform agenda centred on three priorities: restoring financial sector stability, strengthening energy security and sector governance, and mobilising domestic revenues to create fiscal space for productive investment, the WB said.

Reliable energy and a sound financial system are essential to unlock private investment and improve productivity, while stronger domestic revenue mobilisation is needed to create fiscal space for productive and growth-enhancing sectors.

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Mob storms RMU VC's office, 'forces him to resign'

His PS assaulted

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Rajshahi*



Rajshahi Medical University Vice-Chancellor Prof Md Jawadul Haque was allegedly forced to sign a resignation letter yesterday after a mob stormed his office.

The incident occurred while the VC was attending a virtual meeting with health ministry officials on ongoing construction projects, RMU Deputy Registrar Md Mofakkharul Islam said.

He said 20 to 50 people stormed the VC's office around noon and ordered him to sign the resignation letter "without reading it".

The VC's personal secretary, Nazmul Hossain, was assaulted when he intervened, Mofakkharul added.

The mob then allegedly forced Nazmul to sign a separate resignation letter despite his protests that he was a regular employee.

The deputy registrar said the mob took both resignation letters, along with the VC's mobile phone and laptop.

University officials later found that CCTV equipment had been removed and electricity, internet and other communication services had been disconnected. Several rooms had also been locked, disrupting regular activities.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 4

CONSTITUTIONAL REFORM COMMITTEE

BNP focusing on its polls promises

MOHIUDDIN ALAMGIR

The special parliamentary committee on constitutional reform will prioritise implementing the BNP's agenda in line with its election manifesto alongside the July charter, ruling party members of the committee have said.

Key BNP proposals include restoring "Absolute trust and faith in Almighty Allah" as a fundamental state principle, excluding the judiciary and the president from the caretaker government system, and limiting an individual's tenure as prime minister to 10 years.

The BNP also favours allowing the prime minister to simultaneously serve as the party chief and introducing the post of vice-president.

Committee members Chief Whip Nurul Islam Moni and Zainul Abdin confirmed the party's position on the matter to The Daily Star, saying that constitutional matters included in the manifesto would be considered alongside the charter.

Committee Chair and Home Minister Salahuddin Ahmed reiterated that the BNP would fully implement the charter exactly as it was signed.

"Under our election manifesto, we have several proposals that require constitutional amendments, and we will include them too since we secured the people's mandate on those issues," he said during a media briefing after the committee's meeting yesterday.

The BNP manifesto says the July National Charter, signed on October 17, 2025, will be implemented with the highest priority.

It also promises to restore "Absolute trust and faith in Almighty Allah" to the constitution.

"Under our election manifesto, we have several proposals that require constitutional amendments, and we will include them too since we secured the people's mandate on those issues."

Salahuddin Ahmed, committee chair and home minister

Former attorney general Mahmudul Islam writes in his book "Constitutional Law of Bangladesh" that in 1977, then president Ziaur Rahman issued a proclamation order adding the expression "Bismillah-Ar-Rahman-

SEE PAGE 2 COL 5

Editors' Council condemns attacks on journalists

CPJ raises concern over probe into RU attack

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Editors' Council yesterday expressed deep concern over and strongly condemned recent attacks, threats and harassment against journalists across Bangladesh, calling for prompt, impartial investigations and exemplary action against those responsible.

In a statement signed by President Nurul Kabir and General Secretary Dewan Hanif Mahmud, the council described the October 4 attack on journalists at Rajshahi University as "extremely concerning".

Citing media reports, it said at least 10 people, including four student journalists, were injured. The journalists were not acting on behalf of any side but were gathering information and reporting in the public interest.

The council said disagreement with any report, opinion or journalist's professional work could never justify an attack, threat or obstruction.

"An attack on a journalist is not merely an attack on a professional; it is an attack on independent journalism, freedom of expression and the people's right to know," the statement said.

Welcoming the filing of a case and an investigation into the RU incident, the council said the probe must be impartial, credible and evidence-based, and all those involved must be brought to justice regardless of their political or organisational identities.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 4



Photo captures a boy in the middle of a playful game of street football with friends (not in frame) at the capital's Suhrawardy Udyan yesterday. The country is observing Children's Rights Day 2026 at Bangladesh Shishu Academy from October 6 to 8 under the theme 'Let every child have a secure future'. Story on Page 3. PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED

IN MEMORIAM

Second Death Anniversary of

LUBNA CHOUDHURY

Former Chairperson & Founder Principal
Bangladesh International Tutorial (BIT)
Date of Death: October 7, 2024



Our mother passed two years ago, but she lives on in BIT which she founded and moulded with her heart and hands.

As a dedicated educator, she led with her values, love of learning and deep caring for students because she wanted them to blossom into educated and moral adults. She knew that education not only imparts knowledge, but also builds character and ingrains principles. She was a great admirer of freedom fighter Nelson Mandela and often referred to his famous quote:

" Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world "

Our mother too tried to change the world by educating over four generations of students in Bangladesh.

We humbly request that you pray to Allah for her eternal peace.

Anika Rahman & Talita Choudhury
BIT Board Directors

Russia downplays plague reports as Trump offers help

WHO says risks low

AFP, *Moscow*

Russian authorities yesterday denied that they were imposing anti-plague measures after a laboratory technician reportedly died of the disease, as Washington called on Moscow to be "transparent" about the situation.

It was reported last week that a worker at an anti-plague institute in Siberia's Irkutsk region died of pneumonic plague.

But the authorities say the cause of death is not confirmed and health watchdog Rospotrebnadzor has denied claims circulating in a document online that special measures had been put in place.

"We wish to clarify that the document and information in question do not originate from official sources and are untrue," it said on Telegram.

Russian news outlet People of Baikal reported on Friday that the dead woman -- named as 28-year-old Darya Shipilova -- may have contracted pneumonic

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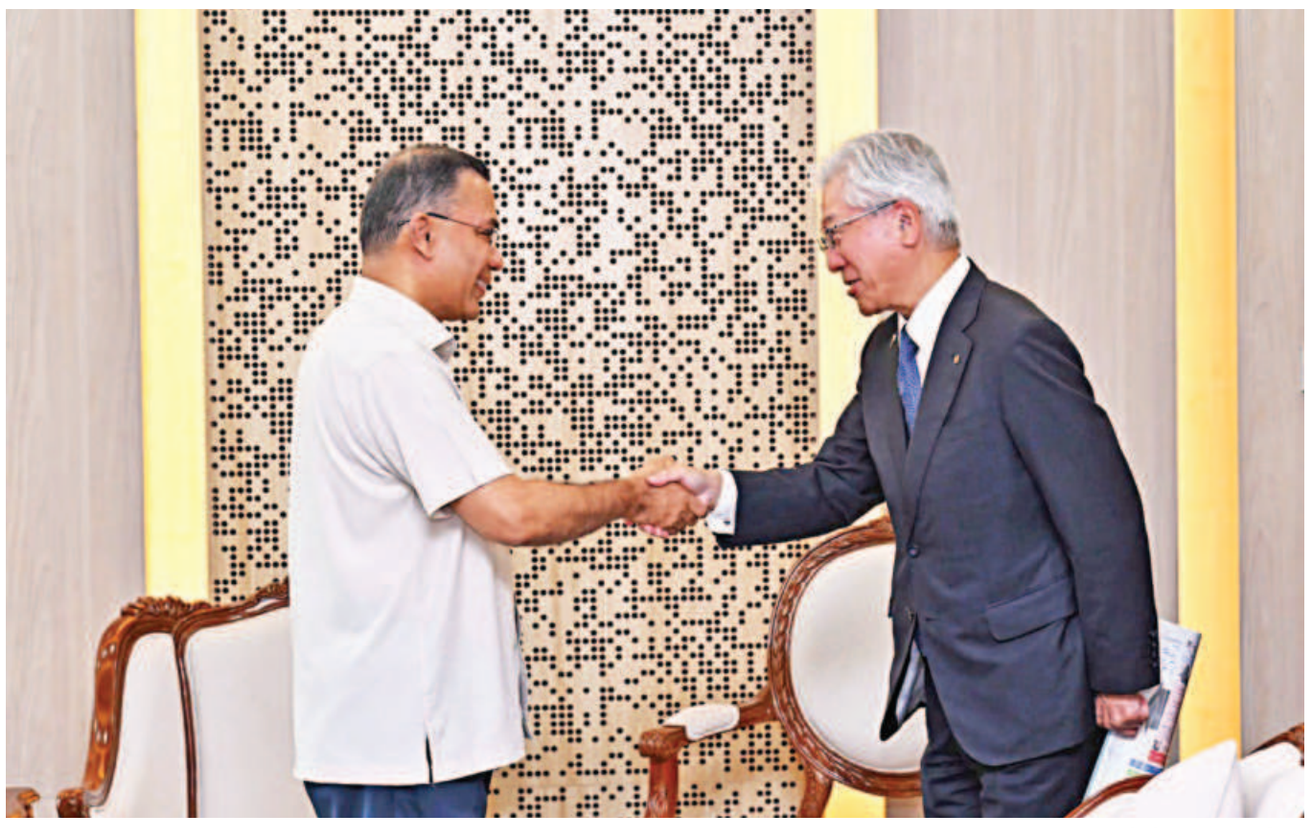


PHOTO: BNP MEDIA CELL

Prime Minister Tarique Rahman greets Toyota Tsusho Vice Chairman Ichiro Kashitani at his Secretariat office yesterday.

Toyota wants to build cars in Bangladesh by 2029

PM welcomes interest as its delegation meets him

UNB, *Dhaka*

Toyota is eyeing to launch vehicle manufacturing in Bangladesh, as a high-level delegation of the Japanese company briefed Prime Minister Tarique Rahman on its investment plans yesterday.

The delegation, led by Toyota Tsusho Vice Chairman Ichiro Kashitani, met the prime minister at his office in the Secretariat and informed him of the company's plan to establish a Toyota vehicle manufacturing plant in Bangladesh, said PM's Deputy Press Secretary Shahadat Hossain Shadhin.

The delegation said the initiative will contribute to employment generation, industrialisation expansion, technology transfer and the development of skilled human resources in the country.

The two sides also discussed expanding Toyota's operations in Bangladesh, potential investment opportunities and the company's long-term business plans.

Tarique welcomed Toyota Tsusho's interest in expanding its investment and operations in Bangladesh.

He said the government is working to ensure a stable, competitive and investment-friendly environment for both domestic and foreign investors.

The prime minister said the government is committed to providing necessary policy support, infrastructure facilities and other opportunities to foreign investors.

SEE PAGE 8 COL 3

Halzen wins Nobel physics prize for 'ghost particle' hunt

REUTERS, *Stockholm*

The Belgian-American Francis Halzen won the 2026 Nobel Prize in Physics for his work creating an Antarctic observatory of ice to detect high-energy neutrinos, elusive subatomic particles that can reveal otherwise inaccessible information about the cosmos.

Halzen, 82, realised that pristine ice at the South Pole could be used to track such neutrinos, sometimes known as "ghost particles" for the way they pass through the Earth without a trace, only interacting with matter extremely rarely.

"The messengers bring information from the cosmos," Eva Olsson, of the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences, told a press conference. "They open the door to distant galaxies and tell us about the processes of exploding stars."



The interactions registered by the IceCube observatory provide information about how high-energy neutrinos are created and may even reveal previously unknown phenomena, the Academy said.

In 2014, the US-based Smithsonian magazine dubbed Halzen "Neutrino Man" when giving him one of its Ingenuity Awards, acclaiming him for an "amazing experiment (that) heralds the beginning of a new era in astronomy".

It even published a comic illustrating his life: "How One Physicist's Pursuit of the Cosmos Took Off in Antarctica".

The observatory -- in effect a telescope that shows neutrinos instead of light -- is set in a cubic kilometre of Antarctic ice, which extends to a depth of 2,500 metres below the surface near the Amundsen-Scott South Pole Station.

More than 5,000 sensors await blips from the nearly massless high-energy neutrinos, which unlike other particles do not lose energy or change direction, in the hope of tracing their paths back to exploding stars, gamma-ray bursts, and cataclysmic phenomena involving black holes and neutron stars. They can expect to register about one per day.

6.2cr people one shock away from poverty: WB

FROM PAGE 1

THE FISCAL PARADOX

Beyond the immediate macroeconomic shocks, the report highlights a structural crisis within Bangladesh's fiscal framework, which ultimately penalises the most vulnerable.

"In a context of tight fiscal constraints, Bangladesh cannot afford support systems that absorb substantial public resources without effectively protecting those most affected by economic shocks," the World Bank said.

Spending on subsidies and transfers supports poor households, but the overall fiscal system fails to protect them. Based on 2022 data, progressive direct taxes and transfers reduce inequality and poverty: the Gini coefficient, a standard measure of inequality, falls from 52.4 to 50.7, and the poverty rate from 19.6 percent to 18.8 percent. But regressive indirect taxes offset these gains. They raise the Gini to 51.4 and push poverty to 20.6 percent, higher than if there were no taxes or benefits at all, according to the World Bank.

Poorer households are therefore net payers to the government once the taxes they pay are set against the cash transfers and subsidies they receive.

MIDDLE EAST WAR FALLOUT

The World Bank highlighted the impact of the ongoing US war on Iran on Bangladesh's economy.

It said structural weaknesses in finance, revenue, energy, and public investment have curbed growth and resilience.

"Higher energy prices and elevated global uncertainty, resulting from the ongoing conflict in the Middle East, have amplified these underlying weaknesses and further exposed the fragility of the economy," the report said.

Import costs have also risen as the war pushed up global commodity prices, particularly energy and fertiliser. Bangladesh's petroleum import bill rose 107 percent, while fertiliser imports increased 42 percent.

If the war continues, import costs, particularly for energy, will remain elevated, putting further pressure on fiscal accounts through higher subsidy requirements, the World Bank said.

A prolonged deterioration in energy supply could also delay the recovery of private investment and industrial activity, further constraining growth.

In South Asia, except Bangladesh, inflation has generally remained within or below the central banks' target ranges, the World Bank noted.

FLAWED SAFETY NET

To help households cope, Bangladesh currently relies on a patchwork of instruments, primarily heavy energy and fertiliser subsidies alongside various social protection programmes. Together, they form a "de facto system of social support". Yet, each faces structural limitations.

Bangladesh's social safety net challenge is no longer a question of aggregate scale, but of deep administrative inefficiency. In 2026, the government administers a sprawling network of 90 separate social protection programmes spread across 25 different ministries.

"This breadth comes at the cost of depth: benefit adequacy is very low, and coverage of the poorest remains a challenge," the World Bank said.

The system remains "fragmented". Disjointed eligibility rules, overlapping beneficiary lists, and convoluted delivery arrangements generate high transaction costs. Crucially, the majority of social protection spending is not explicitly directed towards poor or vulnerable households.

Despite explicitly prioritising poor and vulnerable households, these programmes exclude 62 percent of households in the poorest quintile while including 18 percent of those in the richest. For example, the richest urban quintile alone captures nearly half of total electricity subsidy spending. Moreover, energy and fertiliser subsidies are not only fiscally costly, but also distort incentives by encouraging excessive consumption and reducing incentives for efficiency and conservation.

However, the World Bank highlighted the government's flagship cash-transfer initiative, the Family Card, as an "opportunity to establish a common platform for household assistance." But its effectiveness depends entirely on its ability to correct, rather than inherit, existing targeting failures, according to the World Bank.

Illustrative simulations suggest the Family Card could strengthen the impact of social protection on poverty. Existing programmes reduce poverty by about 3.05 percentage points. Introducing the card, with the same targeting errors as existing cash programmes, would cut poverty by a further 0.95 points, or about 15.8 lakh people. Combining the card with better-targeted old age and widow allowances and a single food assistance programme would cut poverty by 1.72 points, or about 28.5 lakh people, at an extra cost of 0.21 percent of GDP.

ENERGY SUBSIDIES

The fiscal drain is most heavily concentrated in the energy sector, which sits at the heart of Bangladesh's development ambitions and current economic vulnerabilities. For years, electricity tariffs have increasingly diverged from the actual cost of supply, necessitating a rapid expansion in state intervention.

Total power and gas subsidies have skyrocketed over the past decade, rising from Tk 8,580 crore (0.5 percent of GDP) in FY14 to a staggering Tk 83,600 crore (1.5 percent of GDP) in FY25. Of this sum, between 70 and 90 percent is allocated exclusively to the electricity sector.

Currently, the average retail electricity tariff stands at Tk 10.63 per unit. However, when upstream gas support is included, the estimated cost-recovery tariff is significantly higher at Tk 15.16 per unit. The resulting shortfall of Tk 4.53 per unit translates into an electricity fiscal support burden equivalent to roughly 1.1 percent of Bangladesh's GDP.

These subsidies disproportionately favour the wealthy. Residential consumers absorb around 72 percent of the estimated electricity support. Astonishingly, the richest 20 percent of households capture 33.0 percent of this support—more than double the 15.4 percent that reaches the poorest quintile. The bottom 40 percent of the population collectively receives just 30.0 percent of electricity subsidies.

Yet, because their incomes are so low, the relative importance of these benefits is immense for the poor. Combined direct benefits (lower utility tariffs) and indirect benefits (lower market prices for goods produced using subsidised electricity) equate to 18.1 percent of pre-fiscal income for the poorest fifth, compared with a negligible 2.3 percent for the richest.

World Bank simulations suggest that the full removal of electricity subsidies without a compensatory safety net would trigger a 2.8 percentage point spike in the poverty rate. This would instantly push an estimated 47 lakh people into poverty and raise the Gini coefficient by 1.6 points due to surging household utility bills and higher production costs.

TARIFF DILEMMA

Reliable and affordable access to energy is essential for industrial production, export competitiveness, private capital investment, and large-scale job creation.

Despite substantial historical gains in total generation capacity, the sector's foundation has steadily eroded due to weak governance and compounding policy failures. Domestic gas production—long the bedrock of Bangladesh's energy system—has experienced a steady decline as mature fields depleted and exploration failed to keep pace with demand.

Consequently, Bangladesh has undergone a drastic transformation. Fully self-sufficient in natural gas as recently as 2017, the country now relies on imported liquefied natural gas (LNG) to meet one-third of its total gas demand. While power generation capacity expanded rapidly through a growing network of private producers—whose share of total electricity generation recently stood at 43 percent—the sector remains crippled by critical constraints in fuel availability and severe transmission bottlenecks.

Editors' Council condemns attacks on journalists

FROM PAGE 1

The council placed five demands: prompt and impartial investigations into all recent attacks, threats and harassment against journalists; exemplary legal action against those involved, regardless of their identities or political affiliations; a safe working environment for journalists covering political programmes, university events, court proceedings, administrative offices and other public gatherings; an immediate end to obstruction, intimidation and harassment while journalists perform their professional duties; and clear commitments from political parties, their affiliated organisations and others to journalists' safety and independent journalism.

The council said journalists' safety was not a special privilege but an essential condition for a free, democratic and accountable society, adding that independent journalism could not function in an atmosphere of fear, threats and violence.

It urged the government, law enforcement agencies, political parties, educational institutions and other concerned parties to take prompt, visible and lawful action against attacks on journalists and adopt effective measures to prevent such incidents in future.

Meanwhile, the Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ) called on Bangladeshi authorities to promptly and transparently investigate the attack on four journalists at Rajshahi University and prosecute those responsible.

In a statement published on CPJ Asia's Facebook and X accounts yesterday, the media rights watchdog expressed concern that university authorities had filed a case with police on October 5 against "unidentified persons", despite reports that video footage clearly identified those involved.

"Bangladeshi authorities must ensure journalists can report from university campuses safely and without fear of violence, and hold those responsible to account," it said.

The attack took place on Sunday night in front of Shaheed Ziaur Rahman Hall, leaving at least 10 people, including four student journalists, injured. It was allegedly carried out by activists of Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal, the student wing of the ruling BNP.

According to witnesses, the violence erupted around 8:30pm when a group of JCD activists marched to the hall carrying machetes, hockey sticks, pipes and bats over an ongoing Facebook dispute with a student union leader.

Witnesses identified several JCD leaders among the attackers, including RU unit vice-presidents Ahsan Habib and Shariful Islam, joint general secretary Hasibul Islam, and assistant office secretary Shahriar Alam.

Mob storms

FROM PAGE 1

Mofakkharul said some of the group appeared to have taken part in an earlier protest demanding the VC's resignation.

Campus sources said the protest came amid allegations of irregularities in university appointments and other activities. The VC had previously denied these allegations.

Speaking to The Daily Star, Jawadul said some of those who entered his office appeared to be linked to local contractors, while others were outsiders allegedly backed by political groups.

He said they shouted slogans calling him an "Awami League collaborator" and accused him of awarding university contracts to Dhaka-based firms rather than local contractors.

"At one point, they forced me to sign a resignation letter, drove me out of my office and locked it," the VC said.

He added that he had already informed the local administration of the incident and filed an online general diary.

"I have also informed local BNP leaders, and they assured me they would identify those involved and take action against them."

BNP focusing on its polls promises

FROM PAGE 1

Ar-Rahim" before the preamble of the constitution.

The words "nationalism, socialism, democracy and secularism" were replaced with "Absolute trust and faith in the Almighty Allah, nationalism, democracy and socialism meaning economic and social justice", Mahmudul wrote.

The change was incorporated into the constitution through the fifth amendment in 1979.

The 15th amendment, passed during the Awami League regime in 2011, removed "Absolute trust and faith in Almighty Allah" and restored that part of the constitution to the original 1972 wording.

Salahuddin pointed out that the principle of faith in the Almighty was also enshrined in article 8 as a fundamental principle and said even the opposition agreed on the matter.

PLEDGES AND NOTES OF DISSENT

In line with the July charter and its manifesto, the BNP pledged an "election-time, neutral caretaker government" to ensure free and fair national polls and give the system a permanent constitutional and institutional form.

While the caretaker framework is to be settled through discussions based on the July charter, BNP is opposed to involving the judiciary and the president in the system.

The July charter sets out a series of steps for appointing the head of the caretaker government. The process begins with the formation of a five-member panel comprising the prime minister, opposition leader, speaker, deputy speaker from the opposition and a representative of the second-largest opposition party. The panel will select a caretaker chief from a list of nominees submitted by political parties and independents.

If the panel fails to reach a decision, the charter provides for a second step. At one stage, it proposes bringing in an Appellate Division judge and a High Court judge, turning the panel into a seven-member body to vote on a shortlist.

Several parties, including the BNP, objected to this provision.

The BNP also pledged that a person could serve as prime minister for a maximum of 10 years, whether consecutive or non-consecutive.

The July charter, however, says the prime minister cannot simultaneously serve as the party chief, a provision opposed by BNP and its allies.

The party further pledged to ensure a balance of power between the president and prime minister and to strengthen judicial independence.

It proposed introducing a 100-member upper chamber of parliament, with seats distributed in proportion to the number of seats parties secure in the lower house.

Most other parties, however, agreed that the upper chamber should be constituted in proportion to the percentage of votes secured by parties in the national election.

BNP also promised to amend article 70 to allow MPs to vote against their party line except in cases involving no-confidence motions, money bills, constitutional amendments and national security, including wartime situations.

The July charter does not list constitutional amendments or national security as exceptions.

The BNP pledged to enact necessary laws for the formation of the Public Service Commission and Anti-Corruption Commission and for appointments to the Office of the Comptroller and Auditor General. It also proposed transforming the Public Service Commission into a stronger institution for recruitment in education, health and other sectors.

The governor of Bangladesh Bank and the chairperson and members of the Bangladesh Energy Regulatory Commission would be appointed by the government in accordance with law.

A majority of parties in the July charter agreed that the president should appoint the chiefs of the National Human Rights Commission, Information Commission, Bangladesh Press Council, Law Commission and Bangladesh Energy Regulatory Commission, as well as the governor of Bangladesh Bank.

The BNP pledged that the president would appoint the chief justice from among the two most senior judges of the Appellate Division, in accordance with the constitutional provision.

A majority of the parties in the July charter, however, agreed that the president should appoint the senior-most Appellate Division judge as chief justice.

The BNP also proposed appointing an Ombudsman. The "Tax Ombudsman", introduced during a previous BNP tenure, was widely considered effective. The July charter proposes that a search committee headed by the speaker recommend names to the president for appointment as the Ombudsman.

BNP'S OTHER PLEDGES

BNP's manifesto promises that one of the deputy speakers in each chamber of parliament would be nominated from the opposition.

It also pledged that opposition MPs would chair the Public Accounts Committee, Privileges Committee, Estimates Committee and Committee on Public Undertakings of the National Parliament. Chairpersons of other standing committees would also be appointed from the opposition in proportion to the number of seats they hold in parliament.

The BNP pledged that the Supreme Court would have a permanent seat in the capital, while the chief justice could establish permanent benches in each division. It also proposed further strengthening the Supreme Judicial Council and expanding its jurisdiction.

Necessary constitutional amendments would be made to place control over the service terms and conditions of subordinate court judges entirely with the Supreme Court.

A permanent prosecution/attorney service would gradually be established at the district level through law.

On the president's power of pardon, the BNP proposed adding a constitutional provision stating that the president may grant pardon, reprieve and respite for any sentence and remit, suspend or reduce any sentence, but must exercise that power in accordance with standards, principles and procedures prescribed by law.

Local government elections would be held under the direct supervision of the Election Commission, with necessary laws enacted for the purpose.

Appropriate laws would govern the financial management of local government institutions to ensure their effective autonomy, while the relationship between local government bodies and government officers and employees working with them would also be determined by law.

The BNP proposed forming a police commission to ensure professionalism and accountability and make police services more people-friendly. The relevant ordinance would be reviewed, reformed and enacted as appropriate law.

It also proposed reviewing in parliament the formation of an independent criminal investigation service.

Existing laws would be properly applied in investigating and prosecuting corruption in the private sector. Subject to parliamentary approval, Bangladesh would join the Open Government Partnership.

Although income tax returns are private documents, BNP proposed allowing the Anti-Corruption Commission or another authorised body to summon them through the court.

The party also pledged to form an independent inquiry commission to identify officials involved in state terror and repression during the July uprising, and to punish officials found responsible for vote rigging and corruption.

It further promised legal and constitutional protection for those who participated in the historic July student-mass uprising of 2024.

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



Women artisans weave sheetol pati, a traditional mat, in Hailakathi village of Jhalakathi yesterday. The craft, passed down through generations in parts of Jhalakathi, Rajapur and Barishal, is declining as falling demand forces many families to leave the profession. A mat sells for Tk 800-2,700, depending on size and quality.

PHOTO: HABIBUR RAHMAN

IN FOCUS

Strong children mean a stronger nation: PM

UNB, *Dhaka*



Prime Minister Tarique Rahman yesterday said Bangladesh's foundation would grow stronger in a competitive world if every child was given the opportunity to fully develop their abilities.

"Children are the pillars of their families. When children are given the right environment and opportunities to grow and flourish, families also become stronger," he said at a programme marking Children's Rights Day 2026 and the 50th anniversary of Bangladesh Shishu Academy in the capital.

Tarique urged children to develop themselves not only through education but also through sports, Quran recitation, music and other cultural activities.

The PM said the government was working to provide children with opportunities to develop their talents in sports, arts, culture and music, particularly as many families could not afford such facilities.

"We are trying to create these facilities at the school level -- whether it is art, culture, sports or music -- so that every child can choose according to

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ABRAR MURDER

Seven years on, case still stuck in appeals

JNU CORRESPONDENT

Seven years after the murder of Buet student Abrar Fahad, the judicial process is still awaiting final settlement, with appeals pending before the Appellate Division.

Although both the lower court and the High Court



delivered verdicts in the case, the final disposal and execution of the sentences remain stalled as several convicts appealed against the HC judgement.

On December 8, 2021, a Dhaka speedy trial tribunal sentenced 20 accused to death and five others to life imprisonment.

The HC upheld the

SEE PAGE 9 COL 4



DSCC starts dredging work at Dhanmondi Lake

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Dhaka South City Corporation yesterday began dredging and development work at Dhanmondi Lake to restore its navigability and improve its environment and appearance.

Road Transport and Bridges, Railways and Shipping Minister Sheikh Rabiul Alam and DSCC Administrator Md Abdus Salam inaugurated the Tk 26 crore project, which is expected to be completed in around a year.

The 3.10-kilometre-long lake, with an average width of 56 metres, has accumulated an estimated 1,62,534 cubic metres of sludge. DSCC plans to remove it using two floating excavators and four barges.

The approximately 86-acre Dhanmondi Lake area, including a 55-acre waterbody, was developed in the 1960s from remnants of the old Pandu river.

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Dengue deaths hit 281, third highest in 26 years



At least 10 dengue patients died, the highest single-day toll this year, while 1,996 others were hospitalised in the 24 hours to 8:00am yesterday.

HELEMUL ALAM

With 10 more dengue deaths reported yesterday, the death toll from the mosquito-borne disease this year has risen to 281, making it the joint third-highest annual toll since Bangladesh recorded its first major dengue outbreak 26 years ago.

According to the Directorate General of Health Services, the highest number of dengue deaths was recorded in 2023, when 1,705 people died. The toll was 575 in 2024 and 281 in 2022.

A death review by the Institute of Epidemiology Disease Control and Research (IEDCR), led by its Director Prof Quazi Ahmed Zaki, found that more than one-third of dengue patients who died did so within a day of hospital admission.

The review of 119 deaths found that 62.5 percent of the patients died from dengue shock syndrome, 31.2 percent from expanded dengue syndrome and 16.1 percent from dengue with bleeding, while 12.5 percent died from other causes, according to Prof Zaki.

It also found that many patients had faced delays of at least three days before being diagnosed.

Medicine specialist Dr ABM Abdullah said repeated infections,

SEE PAGE 9 COL 4

Textile sector concerns to be raised in JS

Says Shafiqur Rahman

STAFF CORRESPONDENT



Jamaat-e-Islami Ameer and Leader of the Opposition Shafiqur Rahman has assured textile sector leaders that he would raise their concerns in parliament and discuss them with the government when necessary.

He gave the assurance during a meeting with leaders of the Bangladesh Textile Mills Association (BTMA) at the official residence of the leader of the opposition on Minto Road in Dhaka yesterday, according to a press release.

The meeting discussed incentives for the textile sector, gas and power supply, challenges following Bangladesh's graduation from the LDC category, taxes and duties, and various complications.

At a briefing after the meeting, Jamaat Secretary General Mia Golam Porwar said opposing every government initiative was not their political culture.

Porwar said the party would support government initiatives that serve public and national interests, while criticising decisions that go against public interests and protesting if necessary.

Khulna district sees 33 killings in nine months

Rupsha, Paikgachha, Koyra and Dighalia hotspots

DIPANKAR ROY

Like every day, Akhtar Dhali, 55, was sitting at a tea stall beside a mosque in Durjanimahal village of Rupsha upazila after Maghrib prayers on Monday.

Around 6:30pm, gunshots rang out. Locals and family members rushed to the spot and found Akhtar lying face down beside a bench. He was taken to Khulna Medical College Hospital, where doctors declared him dead.

Police said armed assailants wearing helmets and riding three to four motorcycles were involved in the attack.

Akhtar had been struggling to cope with the murder of his son, Joy Dhali, who was hacked to death and had his throat slit on August 15. Akhtar had reportedly received threats from various quarters and was also worried about his financial condition and safety.

His killing has added to concerns over violence in Khulna, where 33 murder cases were recorded in the first nine months of this year.

According to district police, violence was spread across several areas and linked to different types of conflicts, with Rupsha, Paikgachha, Dighalia and Koyra upazilas emerging as hotspots.

The four upazilas recorded 24 murder cases between January and September 29, including 11 in Rupsha alone.

SEE PAGE 9 COL 2

Echoes of the past from Rajshahi chars

BGB hands over recovered artefacts to national museum

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Rajshahi*

Around 26 ancient stone idols and 1,818 metal coins, including a rare stone sculpture of "Revanta" believed to date back to the seventh century, were handed over to the National Museum by Border Guard Bangladesh.

The artefacts, recovered at different times from charlands and border areas of the Barind basin in Rajshahi, were formally handed over to the museum's History and Classical Art Department on September 24.

BGB's Rajshahi Battalion, led by its commanding officer Lt Col Reaz Shahrear, handed over the antiquities to a four-member National Museum delegation headed by Director Sadekul Islam and Keeper Mohammad Monirul Hoque.

"All the antiquities we recovered from February 2025 to July this year were handed over together. They had been preserved in our custody until now," Lt Col Shahrear said.

The Revanta sculpture is considered particularly significant.

According to religious accounts, Revanta -- the Hindu deity of horses, hunting, travellers and forests -- is the youngest son of the solar deity Surya and his wife Sanjna. Worship and representations of Revanta were prevalent in mediaeval eastern India, particularly Bengal and Bihar, with sculptural evidence dating back to as early as the sixth century.

The museum's History and Classical Art Department believes the recovered sculpture dates to the seventh century.

Two other notable pieces are a Jain Tirthankara, believed to date from the ninth or 10th century, and an Aparajita sculpture from the 11th or 12th century.

The collection also includes stone sculptures of Chamunda -- a fierce manifestation of the goddess Durga -- and Nataraja Shiva in dancing form.

Most of the black-stone Vishnu sculptures represent the sculptural tradition of the 11th and 12th centuries, according to the department.

The 1,818 metal coins recovered from the Padma's charlands belong to different periods, including the British era, colonial India, Pakistan and independent Bangladesh.

The museum is preparing the artefacts for preservation and documentation. Once conservation work and information panels

SEE PAGE 9 COL 3







CUET shutdown enters 15th day

Session jam fear looms

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, *Chattogram*

Students of Chittagong University of Engineering and Technology (CUET) continued protests yesterday for the 15th consecutive day, demanding the reinstatement of former vice-chancellor Prof Abu Sadat Mohammad Sayem.

The "shutdown" enforced by students since September 21 night has paralysed academic activities and led to the indefinite suspension of final examinations in at least six departments.

Representatives of three organisations of CUET teachers, officers and employees met government high-ups on Saturday over the issue, but no development followed till yesterday.

"We requested the government high-ups to accept our one-point demand of Prof Sayem's reinstatement as CUET VC. They assured us to consider it after assessment," said Prof Samiun Basir, joint general secretary of CUET Teachers' Association.

Despite concerns among general students over possible session jams and delays to the academic year, protesters have vowed to continue the shutdown and demonstrations until their demand is met.

Meanwhile, newly appointed VC Prof Sheikh Shariful Alam has been performing his duties virtually as the ongoing student resistance has prevented him from entering the campus.

Asked about the academic standstill, Prof Samiun said, "We are also concerned about the potential session jam and we want to return to classrooms. That's why we want the government to accept our demand immediately."

CUET Controller of Examinations Prof Moinul Islam confirmed that final examinations in six departments had been postponed indefinitely.

Prof Sayem served only 56 days as VC but gained widespread support among students for his student-friendly approach, support for campus activities and efforts to establish student exchange programmes and international higher education and career opportunities, said Zulkarnine Mihad, a student.

Light poles over drains raise waterlogging fears

ARUN BIKASH DEY, *Chattogram*

Residents and experts have expressed concern that waterlogging and traffic congestion would worsen in Chattogram city due to the installation of base structures for LED street light poles directly over functional drains and on road spaces in different areas.

The issue came to light after a photograph of a base constructed on a drain in front of Dr Khastagir Government Girls' High School in Jamalkhan area went viral on social media.

Following heavy backlash, the Chattogram City Corporation authorities formed a review committee which has recommended realignment of pole bases at certain spots, said Committee Member Secretary and CCC Superintendent Engineer Farhadul Alam.

Under the Local Government Covid-19 Response and Recovery Project (LGCRRP), a total of 478 LED street light poles are being installed along 11.8-kilometre roads at a cost of Tk 12.14 crore. Base structures for 20-25 poles have already been built in areas including Jamalkhan, Cheragi Pahar, Nandankanan, Kazir Dewri, Muradpur, and Askar Dighi.



The under-construction base structure for a street light pole is seen blocking a roadside drain in Chattogram city. PHOTO: **ARUN BIKASH DEY**

Recent visits to the areas revealed that light pole bases have been built on functional drains in several locations.

"Street lighting is essential for safety at night, but if it obstructs drainage and causes waterlogging during rains, it will only worsen public suffering," said Reshmi Akhter from Jamalkhan.

"Erecting light poles that reduce road space right in front of schools heightens the risk of accidents," said Sushanta Barua, a resident of Nandankanan.

Contacted, CCC Mayor Shahadat Hossain said, "There must have been some flaws. Remedial measures are being taken."

CCC Chief Engineer Anisur Rahman said, "During implementation, it was found that some pole locations fell inside drains. We have temporarily halted work wherever it appeared risky, and those will be removed and corrected."

CCC Superintendent Engineer Farhadul Alam said bypass arrangements are being made in Jamalkhan and Nandankanan to keep drainage normal, adding that large underground pipes will be installed in specific cases to ensure smooth water flow.

However, placing utility poles on footpaths, roads, and drains is nothing new in the port city, said Delwar Majumdar, an urban planner.

"Such incidents show that CCC did not properly oversee the contractors' work," he said.

Tourist dies as scarf gets caught in autorickshaw

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, *Cox's Bazar*

A tourist died after her scarf became entangled in a moving battery-run autorickshaw in Cox's Bazar yesterday.

The incident occurred on Sugandha Road near the beach around 11:00am.

The deceased was identified as Seema Akter, daughter of Mahbubul Alam of Bara Alampur in Debidwar upazila of Cumilla. She was a Class XII student at Fatematuzzuhura Madrasa.

Family members said a group of 17 people arrived in Cox's Bazar on Monday. After having breakfast at their hotel yesterday, they headed to the beach in two autorickshaws. Seema was seated behind the driver.

At one point, her scarf became entangled in the moving vehicle. Hearing her screams, the driver stopped, and family members rescued her. She was taken to Cox's Bazar Sadar Hospital, where an on-duty doctor declared her dead.

400 trees uprooted for watermelon cultivation

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Patuakhali*

Around 400 mangrove trees were uprooted allegedly to clear the land for watermelon cultivation in Galachipa upazila of Patuakhali on Saturday, prompting the Forest Department to file a general diary against four people.

The incident took place in the South Char Biswas mangrove plantation under Char Agasti Beat in Char Biswas Union.

According to the Forest Department, the 75-hectare mangrove plantation was established on reserved forest land in the area in the 2015-16 fiscal year under a government plantation project.



PHOTO: **FOREST DEPARTMENT**

Forest officials said four to five people, allegedly led by local resident Md Shahin Hawlader, uprooted around 400 Keora trees using an excavator on Saturday afternoon to construct an embankment and prepare the land for watermelon cultivation.

On information, forest officials reached the spot and intervened, prompting those involved to flee, said Abdul Barek, officer of Char Agasti Beat, who later filed the GD against Shahin and three others.

"We have been developing the mangrove plantation here since 2015," he added.

Denying the allegation, Shahin claimed the land had been allotted to landless farmers by the Galachipa Land Office in 2004-05 and 2005-06, and that he leased the land from the allottees to cultivate watermelon.

NOTICE

IN THE SUPREME COURT OF BANGLADESH
HIGH COURT DIVISION
(STATUTORY ORIGINAL JURISDICTION)
COMPANY MATTER NO. 1189 OF 2026

NN Services and Engineering Ltd. Address at House No. 37, Road No. 15, Block D, P.O. Banani, P.S. Banani, Dhaka, represented by it's managing Director Mst. Falguni Nupur, daughter of Md. Firoz Hossain and Shahraz Parvin, present address at 84, Shahid Tajuddin Ahmed Smarani, police station – Tejgaon, Dhaka and permanent address at Village and post office- Haripur, police station- Chatmohor, District- Pabna.

.....**Petitioner**

-Versus-

Registrar, Joint Stock Companies & Firms, & Another

.....**Respondents**

Notice is hereby given that an application under Section 159, 167 and section 171 read with section 396 of the Companies Act 1994 for condonation of delay of and extension of time for submitting the mortgage deed No. 5219 dated 11/05/2026 for registration/ creation of charge on the properties of NN Services and Engineering Ltd was moved before the Hon'ble High Court Division of the Supreme Court of Bangladesh on behalf of the petitioner.

Upon preliminary hearing on 20.09.2026 ***Mr. Justice Foyej Ahmed*** was pleased to admit the said application. Any one desirous of opposing the matter may appear before the Hon'ble court either personally or through his/her Legal Counsel on the aforesaid date. Copy of the application may be obtained from the undersigned on payment of necessary costs.

Md. Akram Uddin
Advocate
The Supreme Court of Bangladesh
Suite no. 13/7, Level-13, Eastern Mansion, 67/9,
Pioneer Road, Kakrail, Dhaka. Cell phone nol.
01712532897.

PRAYER TIMING
OCTOBER 7

	Fazr	Zohr	Asr	Maghrib	Esha
AZAN	4-45	12-45	4-15	5-53	7-30
JAMAAT	5-20	1-15	4-30	5-56	8-00

SOURCE: **ISLAMIC FOUNDATION**

SC clears way for filling 15,000 MPO teacher posts

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Supreme Court yesterday cleared the way for the government to appoint competent candidates to around 15,000 vacant posts of headmasters and principals in Monthly Pay Order (MPO)-enlisted educational institutions.

Justice Md Rezaul Haque, chamber judge of the Appellate Division of the SC, stayed a High Court judgment delivered on July 23 scrapping an amended provision requiring 18 years of teaching experience for appointments to those posts.

The SC judge passed the order following a petition filed by the education ministry seeking a stay on the HC judgment.

Following the SC order, there is no legal bar for the government to complete the appointment process to those posts, with viva voce for candidates scheduled to begin on October 15, Attorney General Md Ruhul Quddus Kazal said.

Citing a circular issued on a January 29, the AG said there were 10,278 vacant posts for head-teachers under the Directorate of Secondary and Higher Education, 3,131 vacant posts for principals, vice-principals, supers and assistant supers under the Directorate of Madrasa Education and 150 vacant posts for principals and superintendents under the Directorate of Technical Education.

According to the circular, the total number of vacant posts was 13,559, which could subsequently rise to nearly 15,000, he said.

The requirement of 18 years' teaching experience was introduced through an amendment on March 25 this year. Under the 2021 manpower structure, candidates were required to have 15 years of teaching experience, including three years as an assistant head-teacher.

বাংলাদেশ বিদ্যুৎ উন্নয়ন বোর্ড
Bangladesh Power Development Board
Office of the Project Director
Power Distribution System Development Project, Cumilla Zone, 12th floor
Bidyut Bhaban
1, Abdul Gani Road, Dhaka (camp office)
E-mail- pdsdp.cz.bpdb@gmail.com

Memo No: 27.11.0000.866.07.019.26-367 Date: 04/10/2026

"e-GP Tender Notice"

The tender notice for procurement of the followings is published in e-GP website. This is an online Tender, where only e-Tenders will be accepted in e-GP Portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted. To submit e-Tender, registration on e-GP system (www.eprocure.gov.bd) is mandatory. For more details contact e-GP Help desk.

e-GP Tender ID	Package No.	Procurement Title	Last Selling Date	Closing & Opening Date
1342908	GD-70	Supply of 11/0.4 kV, 250 kVA Distribution Transformer	01-11-2026 04:00 PM	02-11-2026 11:30 AM
1346267	GD-71	Supply of 11/0.4 kV, 250 kVA Distribution Transformer	01-11-2026 04:00 PM	02-11-2026 11:35 AM
1346280	GD-72	Supply of 11/0.4 kV, 250 kVA Distribution Transformer	01-11-2026 04:00 PM	02-11-2026 11:40 AM

বিদ্যুৎ/জন-২০২(২)/০৬/১০/২৬

04/10/26
(Sheikh Moin Uddin)
Project Director (C.E)
PDSDP, Cumilla Zone

GD-2421

বাংলাদেশ ব্যাংক
(সেন্ট্রাল ব্যাংক অব বাংলাদেশ)
প্রধান কার্যালয়
মতিঝিল, ঢাকা-১০০০
বাংলাদেশ

ব্যাংকার্স সিলেকশন কমিটি সচিবালয়
ই-মেইল- info.bscs@bb.org.bd

বিজ্ঞপ্তি নং- ৩২২/২০২৬ তারিখ: ২০ আশ্বিন, ১৪৩৩ / ০৫ অক্টোবর, ২০২৬

নিয়োগ বিজ্ঞপ্তি

ব্যাংকার্স সিলেকশন কমিটি (BSC) -এর সদস্যভুক্ত আনসার ভিডিপি উন্নয়ন ব্যাংকে সিস্টেম ম্যানেজার (গ্রেড-৩) (Job ID: 26131) এবং প্রিন্সিপাল অফিসার (গ্রেড-৬) (Job ID: 26132) পদে সরাসরি নিয়োগের নিমিত্ত প্রতিযোগিতামূলক পরীক্ষার মাধ্যমে প্যানেল প্রস্তুতির লক্ষ্যে প্রকৃত বাংলাদেশী নাগরিকের নিকট হতে Online এ দরখাস্ত আহ্বান করা যাচ্ছে। আবেদন দাখিলের বিস্তারিত নিয়ম ও শর্তাবলী বাংলাদেশ ব্যাংকের নিয়োগ সংক্রান্ত ওয়েবসাইটে (https://erecruitment.bb.org.bd) পাওয়া যাবে।

ডিসিপি: ৪৮/২০২৬-২৬৩৪
তারিখ: ০৬-১০-২০২৬

স্বাক্ষরিত/-
(মিজানুর রহমান আকন)
পরিচালক (বিএসসিএস) ও
সদস্য সচিব, বিএসসি

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

GD-2420

চট্টগ্রাম বন্দর কর্তৃপক্ষ
বন্দর ভবন, চট্টগ্রাম-৪১০০
www.cpa.gov.bd

ঃ গণবিজ্ঞপ্তি ঃ

চট্টগ্রাম বন্দরের নিরাপত্তা ও সংবেদনশীল স্থাপনার সুরক্ষায় অননুমোদিত ফটোগ্রাফি, ভিডিও ধারণ ও প্রচার ইত্যাদি থেকে বিরত থাকার নির্দেশনা

চট্টগ্রাম বন্দর বাংলাদেশের প্রধান সামুদ্রিক প্রবেশদ্বার এবং জাতীয় অর্থনীতি, আমদানি রপ্তানি ও আন্তর্জাতিক বাণিজ্যের অন্যতম গুরুত্বপূর্ণ কেন্দ্র। আন্তর্জাতিক মানদণ্ড ও জাতীয় নিরাপত্তা বিধিমালা অনুসরণ করে বন্দরের কার্যক্রম সফলভাবে পরিচালিত হচ্ছে। এরই ধারাবাহিকতায়, চট্টগ্রাম বন্দর ISPS অনুসরণকারী বন্দর হিসেবে Zero Observation অর্জন করেছে। দেশের একটি গুরুত্বপূর্ণ 'ক' শ্রেণীর Key Point Installation (KPI) হিসেবে চট্টগ্রাম বন্দরের নিরাপত্তা, গুরুত্বপূর্ণ অবকাঠামো ও সংবেদনশীল স্থাপনাসমূহের সুরক্ষা জাতীয় স্বার্থের সঙ্গে সরাসরি সম্পৃক্ত।

চট্টগ্রাম বন্দর কর্তৃপক্ষ আইন, ২০২২ এর ১২ ধারা অনুযায়ী বন্দরের সুষ্ঠু পরিচালনার স্বার্থে এবং সর্বসাধারণের প্রবেশাধিকার নিয়ন্ত্রণের উদ্দেশ্যে বন্দর সীমানার অন্তর্ভুক্ত সকল স্থান ও স্থাপনা সংরক্ষিত বন্দর এলাকা হিসাবে বিবেচিত। তদুপরি, Official Secrets Act, 1923-এর বিধান অনুযায়ী রাষ্ট্রের নিরাপত্তা ও অর্থসংশ্লিষ্ট সংবেদনশীল স্থান, তথ্য, নকশা, ছবি বা অন্যান্য উপাদান অননুমোদিত ধারণ, প্রকাশ বা প্রচার আইনত দন্ডনীয় হতে পারে।

কর্তৃপক্ষের পূর্বানুমোদন ব্যতীত সামাজিক যোগাযোগমাধ্যম, অনলাইন প্ল্যাটফর্ম, ব্লগমাধ্যম বা অন্য কোনো মাধ্যমে বন্দরের নিরাপত্তা ব্যবস্থা, সংরক্ষিত এলাকা, নজরদারি সক্ষমতা, স্থাপনার বিন্যাস, অপারেশনাল তথ্য প্রকাশ ও প্রচার করা সম্পূর্ণ অনাকাঙ্ক্ষিত এবং তা কোনোভাবেই গ্রহণযোগ্য নয়।

অতএব, যথাযথ কর্তৃপক্ষের অনুমোদন ব্যতীত বন্দরের সংবেদনশীল স্থাপনা, নিরাপত্তা ব্যবস্থা, গুরুত্বপূর্ণ অবকাঠামো, প্রবেশ ও নিয়ন্ত্রণ ব্যবস্থা, নজরদারি ব্যবস্থা, যোগাযোগ ব্যবস্থা, জাহাজ ও কার্গো ব্যবস্থাপনা এবং অন্যান্য সংবেদনশীল স্থাপনার অননুমোদিত ফটোগ্রাফি, ভিডিও ধারণ, ড্রোন প্রবহন বা যেকোনো ধরনের দৃশ্যমান তথ্য সংগ্রহ ও প্রচার থেকে বিরত থাকার জন্য সংশ্লিষ্ট সকলকে নির্দেশনা প্রদান করা হলো। বিশেষ করে KPI, সংরক্ষিত এলাকা, এবং নিরাপত্তাসংক্রান্ত স্থাপনার ত্রিসীমানায় কোনো ধরনের অনুমতিবিহীন কার্যক্রম কঠোরভাবে পরিহার করতে হবে।

এ প্রেক্ষিতে বন্দর ব্যবহারকারী সকলকে এ সংক্রান্ত নিরাপত্তা নির্দেশনা যথাযথভাবে প্রতিপালনের জন্য নির্দেশনা প্রদান করা হলো। এ ধরনের অননুমোদিত তথ্য প্রকাশ বা প্রচারের মাধ্যমে বন্দর নিরাপত্তা বিঘ্নিত হলে সংশ্লিষ্ট ব্যক্তির বিরুদ্ধে প্রযোজ্য আইন, নিরাপত্তা বিধিমালা ও বন্দর কর্তৃপক্ষের প্রচলিত নির্দেশনা অনুযায়ী কঠোর ব্যবস্থা গ্রহণ করা হবে।

সচিব
চট্টগ্রাম বন্দর কর্তৃপক্ষ

GD-2423

Tender Announcement

Advertisement Number# QCBD/Tender/12/2026 **Date: 07/10/2026**

Qatar Charity Bangladesh Office invites bids for Tender No. QCBD/Tender/12/2026 for the Establishment of a framework agreement for the supply of cardiac catheterization medical devices, consumables and related support services for pediatric and adult patients in Bangladesh and to be served at different areas in Bangladesh.

A brief statement of the required items, work or services	Quantity	Order classification	Deadline for Tender Document Collection by email	Closing date
Establishment of a framework agreement for the supply of cardiac catheterization medical devices, consumables and related support services for pediatric and adult patients	Mentioned in Tender Schedule	Supply of Cardiac Catheterization Medical Devices	Date: 12/10/2026 Time: 09:00 AM to 05:00 PM	Date: 14/10/2026 Time: by 11:59 PM (23:59) Bangladesh Standard Time

Bidders will submit two folders (Technical and financial)

- **Tender documents can be obtained through e-mail** qcbangladesh@qcharity.org **during official working hours.**
- **Bids submission to:** Mentioned digital link and process in the tender schedule.
- **NB:** Bidders must mention the number and date of this tender as shown in the tender documents.
- **Accept or reject of tender/bid:** Qatar Charity reserves the right to accept or reject any or all tender/bid without assigning any reason and Qatar Charity is not bound to select lowest bidder at any cause.

VOTER LIST ROW

Priyanka, Rahul briefly detained

AFP, *New Delhi*

Indian police briefly detained opposition leader Rahul Gandhi yesterday during a protest march to demand the resignation of the country's election chief over a large-scale revision of voter lists.

Officers detained him along with other lawmakers but released them soon after.

The revision of voter lists has drawn criticism over alleged irregularities in the decision-making process, with opposition politicians accusing the election commission of acting at the behest of Bharatiya Janata Party. Critics also say the drive has disproportionately affected marginalised and minority communities, especially Muslims.

The Election Commission of India has rejected allegations of wrongdoing, saying the revision process is aimed at ensuring the accuracy and integrity of electoral rolls.

Yesterday, opposition members began a march from parliament towards the commission's headquarters, but were stopped by a heavy police presence.

"What has been done to our country is called treason. Nobody is going to escape," Rahul told during the protest.

The protest has been ignited by a report last month by The Indian Express newspaper, which said that two of the election commission's three members had formally objected at least 14 times to key decisions linked to the revision, and that the names of 130 million citizens had been deleted since the exercise began in 2025.

Protests began on Friday, demanding that commission chief Gyanesh Kumar step down. Kumar has not commented publicly.





Indian opposition leader Rahul Gandhi speaks to his sister, Priyanka Gandhi Vadra (not in the picture), after police detained her during a protest organised by opposition parties demanding the resignation of Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar in New Delhi, yesterday. Inset, TMC leader Derek O'Brien speaks with Rahul and Priyanka during the protest.

Houthis claim Riyadh attacks

Deny losing territory; Qatar says US, Iran still in talks to end war

AFP, *Sanaa*

Yemen's Houthis yesterday claimed an attack on the Saudi capital's main airport and denied being pushed back by government forces, who have launched a major operation to recapture lost territory.

The Houthi statements come as Yemen's military said it had removed the pro-Iran group from areas around the Bab al-Mandeb strait, a Red Sea chokepoint, and the port city of Mocha.

Houthi military spokesman Yahya Saree said the group still held all territory seized last month when they swept through coastal areas along the Red Sea oil-and-cargo route.

On Monday, the Houthis said they had struck Riyadh airport and a refinery belonging to Saudi state oil giant Aramco.

Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian said talks with the US were "meaningless" and only resulted in renewed attacks.

Loud explosions rattled the Saudi capital on Monday evening. They were followed by another explosion yesterday that echoed through northern parts of the city, residents told AFP.

Saudi authorities have not publicly acknowledged the closures or confirmed any strikes targeting the facility.

But yesterday, the civil aviation authority said at least three people were wounded in attacks on Jazan and Najran airports near the Yemen border a day earlier.

Pakistan and Turkey on Monday pledged to deploy troops to Saudi Arabia under a mutual defence pact following weeks of Houthi attacks.

Meanwhile, Mediator Qatar yesterday said the United States and Iran were still engaged in talks to end the Middle East war, despite an apparent deadlock.

Also yesterday, Qatar's Emir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani met Iran's Interior Minister Eskandar Momeni in Doha, a statement from the royal palace said.

THIRD ANNIV OF ISRAEL'S WAR

Gaza bleeds on

Trump's plan has not stopped killings of Palestinians

INTERNATIONAL DESK

Israel killed two more Palestinians as United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres called for a permanent ceasefire in Gaza ahead of the third anniversary of Israel's war on the enclave.

"It is time for the ceasefire to become permanent. It is time to allow humanitarian assistance at scale. And it is time to respect international law," Guterres said in a statement, calling for a "political path to lasting peace across the whole region."

He said Palestinians in Gaza had faced a "massive loss of life, displacement and destruction", adding, "Their suffering, too, demands an end, now."

Since October 7, 2023, Israel's military campaign in Gaza has killed more than 74,200 people.

US President Donald Trump's year-old plan to end the war has also stalled, with Israel carrying out near-daily attacks and maintaining control over around two-thirds of the shattered enclave, where Palestinians face dire conditions.

The initial phase of Trump's 20-point plan resulted in a ceasefire on October 10, 2025.

However, other goals of the plan -- including disarming Hamas, securing an Israeli withdrawal and rebuilding Gaza -- remain far from reach. Gaza's health ministry says at least 1,400 Palestinians have been killed since the ceasefire.

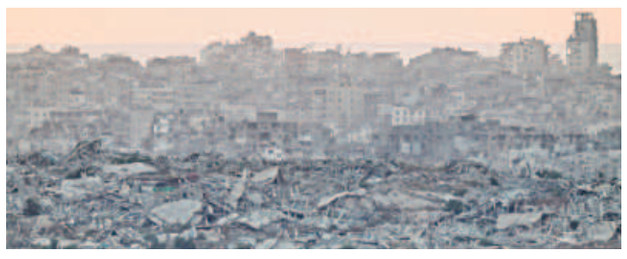
The initial plan foresaw Israel withdrawing to a so-called "yellow line", leaving its troops in control of 53 percent of Gaza. Since then, the Israeli military has expanded its effective control to around 70 percent.

The promised surge in aid also failed to materialise amid Israel's resistance. Global hunger watchdog IPC says more than 1.2 million people still face acute hunger in Gaza.

Israel, however, called the plan unacceptable, saying it would not withdraw until Hamas was fully disarmed. The international force that the plan envisioned has yet to be formed.

A year on, Palestinians continue scavenging rubble for materials to prop up tents and other shelters. The Board of Peace unveiled a $2.45 billion plan in September to begin rebuilding Gaza, but that is a fraction of the estimated $71.4 billion needed over the next decade, according to UN.

On the other hand, Israeli right-wing politicians are now openly calling for Gazans' mass removal through "voluntary emigration". Israeli Defence Minister Israel Katz said last month there was "no real solution for Gaza in the end without this migration".





High school students march during a demonstration as part of a nationwide protest movement for better learning conditions in Rennes, western France, yesterday. Tens of thousands of demonstrators took to the streets across France yesterday, as unions and teachers joined high school students. PHOTO: **AFP**

IN BRIEF

Trump approval rate hovers at 32 percent

REUTERS, *Washington*

President Donald Trump's approval rating held at a record low in recent days, as many Hispanic voters panned his job performance and planned to spurn his Republican Party in next month's midterm elections, according to a Reuters/Ipsos poll completed on Monday.

The six-day poll showed 32% of Americans giving a thumbs up to Trump's presidency, unchanged from a September Reuters/Ipsos survey that saw the leader's rating at the lowest of his political career.

Just 24% of Hispanic Americans, who propelled Trump to victory in the 2024, approve of Trump's performance in the White House, the lowest share in either of Trump's two presidential terms.

Republicans' advantage among older Americans has dwindled too. Voters age 50 or older preferred Trump's party over the Democratic Party by just 2 percentage points -- 44% to 42% --compared to an 8-point Republican advantage in December.

Ex-German spy chief arrested for 'treason'

AFP, *Berlin*

Germany's former foreign spy chief was arrested yesterday on suspicion of espionage, accused of seeking to pass sensitive information to overseas intelligence services, prosecutors said.

August Hanning, who ran Germany's BND intelligence agency between 1998 and 2005, is suspected of charges including "attempted treason" and "espionage", according to a statement from federal prosecutors.

Hanning's former chief of staff, partially named as Manfred D, was also arrested on suspicion of "aiding and abetting attempted treason and treasonous espionage". Premises linked to both men were searched in several locations, including the capital Berlin.

Prosecutors say that Manfred D also served as the chief of staff for Hanning's successors between 2012 and 2026, and used this role to gain access to confidential information which he then passed on to Hanning "in exchange for remuneration".

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Ministry of Labour and Employment
Department of Inspection for Factories and Establishments (DIFE) Modernization & Strengthening of DIFE and Construction of 13 District Offices Project
Shromo Bhaban, 196, Shaheed Syed Nazrul Islam Soroni,
Bijoynagar, Dhaka-1000

Memo No: 40.01.0000.105.07.026.23-1758 Dated: 04/10/2026

e-Tender Notice

e-Tender has been invited in the National e-GP Portal for following Procurement. Interested tenderers are requested to visit (http://www.eprocure.gov.bd) website for details.

SI. No	Tender ID	Name of the Goods	Tender Document Last Selling Date and Time	Tender Closing Date and Time	Method
01	1344859	Equipment	18/10/2026 & 17:00	19/10/2026 & 13:30	e-GP

This is an online tender, where only e-Tender will be accepted in the National e-GP portal. For further information and guidelines please contact with e-GP help desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd)

04/10/2026
(Md. Abdul Awal)
Assistant Project Director
Modernization & Strengthening of DIFE and Construction of 13 District Offices Project
Department of Inspection for Factories and Establishments (DIFE)

GD-2419

COMMONWEALTH SCHOLARSHIPS

University Grants Commission of Bangladesh
UGC Bhaban, Plot # E-18/A, Agargaon Administrative Area, Sher-e-Bangla Nagar, Dhaka-1207
www.ugc.gov.bd

Viva-voce announcement for the Commonwealth `Scholarships tenable in the UK (Ph.D & MS) from September/October-2027

The Viva-voce exam of the Commonwealth Scholarships tenable in the UK (MS & Ph. D) from September/October-2027 will be held on 11 and 12 October 2026 respectively, at UGC Bhaban, Agargaon, Dhaka. The applicants are requested to visit the UGC website (www.ugc.gov.bd) for the purpose of finding short listed candidates, Viva-voce exam date(s) with time, etc. All the relevant information and directions will be timely uploaded at the UGC website under the heading of "Notice Board/International Collaboration, Scholarship and Fellowship Box". The applicants must visit and collect all the information and directions from the UGC website by their own responsibilities. Any attempt of persuasion regarding the Viva-voce will disqualify the applicant(s).

06.10.2026
Director
International Collaboration Division
University Grants Commission of Bangladesh

GD-2423

The Daily Star
FOUNDER EDITOR: **LATE S. M. ALI**

Restore teachers' status and dignity

This cannot be achieved without decent pay for them

Prime Minister Tarique Rahman's strong assertion that the dignity of teachers in society is closely linked to the dignity and image of the state is undoubtedly a welcome and encouraging statement. Marking World Teachers' Day on October 5, the PM stressed the need to make teaching an attractive and competitive profession so the most talented people opt for it as their first career. We laud him for his statement, which came after this daily reported in detail how the teaching profession has remained undervalued for a long time.

According to the report, primary teachers are often placed in the same pay grade (Grade 13) as drivers, clerks, and stenographers even though they require higher academic qualifications to enter the profession. Citing a recruitment advertisement for a technician in Grade 13, the report noted that anyone with SSC and HSC certificates is eligible to apply, whereas the minimum qualification for an assistant primary teacher is a bachelor's degree.

Another report published on the same day quoted officials from the finance ministry as saying that the recent pay hike for civil servants, effective from July this year, will not immediately be available to teachers under the Monthly Pay Order (MPO) scheme, the system through which basic salaries and portions of allowances are paid to teachers at approved educational institutions. According to the officials, the delay is because payments under the MPO system are still processed manually, while the salaries of civil servants are managed through centralised digital software. Government employees are set to receive the higher salaries, including arrears dating back to July, with this month's pay.

Quality recruitment, appropriate training, and decent and attractive pay structures are essential to improving the quality of education and raising it to global standards.

This is yet another instance of the neglect that teachers—and ultimately the education system—receive in the state's policy-making priorities. These disparities must be removed as soon as possible if the government genuinely wants to make teaching an attractive profession again. Dignity without decent pay is merely wishful thinking.

The neglect of teachers extends beyond pay disparities. They also face very limited promotion opportunities and the absence of a clear career progression path. An expert committee under the interim government proposed abolishing the post of assistant teacher and recruiting new teachers at Grade 12. They would be confirmed after two years and promoted to senior teachers in Grade 11 after another two years. Headteachers would be placed in Grade 10. The government should urgently consider these recommendations. Quality recruitment, appropriate training, and decent and attractive pay structures are essential to improving the quality of education and raising it to global standards. Without providing teachers with adequate financial support and removing existing disparities with equivalent professions, any statement about restoring their dignity will become another rhetoric.

Rein in the resort boom

Protect Sundarbans, other ecologically critical areas from unchecked resort development

The growing resort business around the Sundarbans, with little regard for its fragile ecosystem, is deeply worrying. Over the past seven or eight years, at least 21 resorts and cottages have sprung up along the forest in Khulna and Satkhira, while another 10 are reportedly being built. Concrete structures are being built by cutting trees and filling wetlands, while loud music, barbecue parties and uncontrolled tourist movement are disrupting the forest's environment—all in areas where commercial construction is legally restricted.

The Sundarbans and its surrounding area were declared an Ecologically Critical Area (ECA) in 1999, covering 10 kilometres from the forest boundary. However, none of the resorts reportedly obtained the necessary environmental clearance or registration from the district administration. Around 10 resorts have been built beside the Dhangmari canal, a declared dolphin sanctuary where endangered Gangetic and Irrawaddy dolphins are found. Tourist boats regularly use the canal, often without permission, while noise, bright lights, and waste from the resorts are affecting the surrounding ecosystem. Some resorts reportedly continue to operate and take tourists inside the forest even when entry is prohibited during the June-August period.

The problem is not confined to the Sundarbans alone. In Bandarban, numerous resorts and cottages have been built by cutting hills and trees, while natural streams are reportedly being obstructed and water bodies polluted by plastic and untreated waste. The situation in Saint Martin's is equally worrying. Despite being declared an ECA in 1999 and restrictions on construction, new resorts and cottages are reportedly being built by clearing keya forests, cutting coconut trees and using sand and limestone taken from the beach. And in Sonadia, after nearly 9,000 acres of forest land were allocated to the Bangladesh Economic Zones Authority (BEZA) in 2017 for an ecotourism park, large-scale clearing of the island's mangrove forest began. Between 2017 and 2025, at least 6,000 acres were cleared for building shrimp enclosures. Such activities cannot continue.

We, however, welcome the Department of Environment's recent order to stop the operation of 18 resorts around the Sundarbans and hope its directive will be enforced fully and without exception. The DoE has also warned of conducting mobile court operations in the areas. But clearly, eviction alone will not restore the forest ecosystem. The mangroves must be restored, natural tidal flows brought back and effective monitoring put in place to prevent renewed encroachment. The government must also take action against resort developers, irrespective of their political affiliation. More importantly, the government must establish and enforce clear rules for tourism in ecologically critical areas. It must act now to protect the Sundarbans, Bandarban, Saint Martin's and other fragile ecosystems from the unchecked resort boom.

The cost of leaving the LPG market to private control



Kallol Mustafa is an engineer and writer who focuses on power, energy, environment, and development economics. He can be reached at kallol_mustafa@yahoo.com.

■ KALLOL MUSTAFA

While the country's LPG market is experiencing turmoil, the market in neighbouring India remains relatively stable. Consumers there can obtain LPG cylinders on time at government-fixed prices, delivered to their homes.

Since the war began in the Middle East, India has raised the price of domestic LPG—used in households—twice. The first increase, in March, was by 60 rupees, equivalent to Tk 77, and the second, in June, was 29 rupees, or Tk 37—a total increase of 89 rupees or Tk 114 since the war began.

The price of a 14.2kg domestic LPG cylinder in India now stands at 942 rupees, or Tk 1,205, and it has not been increased since June. Based on this price, a 12kg cylinder—the type used in Bangladesh—would cost 796 rupees, or Tk 1,015, in India. Compared to this, the government-fixed price of LPG in Bangladesh, even before the war, was higher: a 12kg cylinder cost Tk 1,341. In reality, however, consumers often had to pay even more.

After the war began, Bangladesh raised the LPG price by a total of Tk 599 in two rounds in April. After several subsequent increases and reductions, the official price eventually reached Tk 1,837. But in reality, consumers are buying LPG from the market at much higher prices.

The war in the Middle East is the same, but its impact on ordinary people in the two countries differs greatly. The reason for this difference lies in the contrasting structures and management of the two markets.

In Bangladesh, the LPG sector is almost entirely dependent on a handful of private companies, over which the government has little effective control. Rather, these companies appear to exercise considerable influence over the government. Whenever they create an artificial shortage, the government ends up raising LPG prices.

The same allegation has been raised over the latest price increase. The LPG Traders' Cooperative Association says LPG-importing companies began reducing supplies to the market from September 20. Initially, supply was cut by 30 percent; later, it exceeded 50 percent, creating the LPG shortage in the market.

Surprisingly, LPG imports into Bangladesh did not decline drastically. The country imported 1,58,000 metric tonnes of LPG in August and another 1,56,000 tonnes in September. This raises the obvious question: why did market supply decline? Unless LPG was being stockpiled, there should have been no reason for market supply to fall.

India, by contrast, has an LPG market controlled almost entirely by three state-owned companies: HP Gas, Indane Gas, and Bharat Gas. Through these companies, the Indian government imports LPG and sells it at regulated prices through designated dealers. Consumers book LPG through mobile apps, telephone, or SMS. Dealers then deliver the cylinders to consumers' addresses at the fixed price, with no additional delivery charge. The delivery charge is included in the LPG price. A consumer can purchase one 14.2kg LPG cylinder per month at the government-fixed price of 942 rupees. If more LPG is required, additional cylinders have to be purchased at comparatively higher market prices.

To prevent cylinders from being diverted and sold at inflated prices on the black market, the government uses a Delivery Authentication Code (DAC) system. When a consumer books an LPG cylinder, an OTP or DAC is sent to their registered mobile number. The delivery can be marked as complete only after the consumer receives the cylinder and shares the code with the delivery worker. This makes it difficult for dealers to charge above the fixed price or divert cylinders elsewhere.

For years, people in Bangladesh have been suffering from a shortage of cooking fuel because of the country's natural gas crisis. Ensuring the availability of LPG at affordable prices, safely and reliably, could have been a solution. Clearly, this solution cannot be achieved by leaving the LPG market entirely in the private companies' hands. Bangladesh could adopt India's approach of ensuring LPG sale at regulated prices through state-owned companies. At the same time, the government must regularly monitor and oversee private companies' LPG imports, storage and supply to ensure sale at government-fixed prices and to prevent artificial shortages.

Unless proper regulation and state intervention curb private companies' monopolistic dominance over the LPG market, the current chaos will continue.



The LPG market has been unstable for nearly two weeks, and many consumers have not been able to buy LPG cylinders even after agreeing to pay higher than the government-fixed price. FILE PHOTO: STAR

Forcing consumers to pay higher prices for an essential commodity by reducing supply and creating an artificial shortage in the market, to which the government subsequently responds by formally raising the commodity's price, is a known tactic that was used repeatedly—be it for soybean oil, sugar or LPG—under the Awami League government. It was not expected under an elected government that came to power with a huge mandate. Rather, people hoped that essential commodity markets would be free from the monopolistic control of business syndicates. But the recent price hike of LPG indicates otherwise.

The LPG market has been unstable for nearly two weeks: 12kg LPG cylinders were being sold for Tk 400-900 more than the government-fixed price. In some places, consumers could not buy LPG cylinders even after agreeing to pay higher prices.

Against this backdrop, the Bangladesh Energy Regulatory Commission (BERC), from the evening of October 4, raised the price of a 12kg LPG cylinder in the private sector by Tk 252 to Tk 1,837, and that of autogas (LPG used in vehicles) to Tk 84.62 per litre from Tk 73.09. BERC cited higher international prices of propane and butane, the two main components of LPG, as well as increased shipping costs to justify the hike. Since the increase was imposed unilaterally without any public hearing, how accurately it reflects the rise in international prices remains a question.

The LPG price hike comes at a time when Bangladesh has already been suffering from prolonged high inflation—the highest in South Asia. Just two weeks ago, on September 21, a fuel price hike pushed up the prices of essential commodities further.

Nearly one crore consumers use LPG as fuel in the country. Around 80 percent of it is used for cooking, while the rest is consumed by industry and transport. The sharp increase in LPG prices will directly raise household cooking costs and increase the operating costs in the transport and industrial sectors that use LPG.

WORLD COTTON DAY

Can cotton diplomacy raise RMG prospects?



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Views expressed in this article are the author's own.

■ IFTEKHAR UL KARIM

From Eli Whitney's cotton gin, which transformed American cotton production and fuelled the expansion of slavery, to a cotton-related claim brought to Abraham Lincoln's attention on the evening of his assassination, the fibre remained deeply intertwined with America's economic history. Across the Atlantic, Bengal transformed cotton, derived from the Arabic qutn, into the legendary Dhaka muslin, coveted worldwide, before colonial rule hastened its decline. Today, Bangladesh has re-emerged as a global textile powerhouse and remains among the world's largest cotton importers. From producing its own celebrated cotton textiles to sourcing fibre from across the world, Bangladesh's evolving textile economy is opening new avenues for trade, innovation, and economic diplomacy.

The emerging relationship with the US illustrates how cotton is becoming more than a raw material. The cotton clause in the Bangladesh-US trade pact links potential preferential tariff treatment for certain Bangladeshi apparel exports to purchases of American cotton and textile inputs. While this creates opportunities for deeper cooperation, its commercial benefits will depend on sourcing costs, eligibility requirements, and implementation. Cotton diplomacy must therefore translate into measurable advantages for manufacturers rather than simply increasing import commitments.

The launch of CottonPort, Bangladesh's first digital raw-cotton marketplace, marks a tangible step forward. With an initial offering of 82 tonnes of Virginia cotton, the platform seeks to connect American suppliers directly with Bangladeshi spinning mills, improving pricing transparency and traceability. A planned private warehouse in Chattogram could further accelerate deliveries and reduce procurement uncertainty. Together, these initiatives demonstrate how international cooperation can evolve beyond trade agreements into practical improvements in supply-chain efficiency.

Bangladesh's engagement with Brazil adds another dimension to this emerging cotton diplomacy. Its pursuit of preferential market access for garments made with Brazilian cotton extends the relationship beyond Washington. Such partnerships could transform raw-material procurement into wider export opportunities while preserving diversified sourcing options.

Cotton traceability is becoming increasingly important as global buyers demand greater sourcing transparency. The US restrictions on products linked to forced labour in Xinjiang underscore the importance of verifying fibre origins. Integrating credible traceability systems across spinning, weaving and garment manufacturing could help exporters meet evolving buyer requirements. Cotton diplomacy must therefore extend beyond preferential tariffs to build the transparency, trust, and market confidence essential for long-term competitiveness.

While Bangladesh is strengthening its international cotton partnerships, disagreements over yarn imports continue to challenge its domestic textile industry. The government's recent decision to suspend the withdrawal of bonded import facilities for 10-30 count cotton yarn followed competing concerns from spinning mills and garment exporters. Domestic millers argue that unrestricted imports undermine local investment and employment, while apparel manufacturers caution that sourcing restrictions could increase costs and weaken export competitiveness. The disagreement underscores the need to strengthen domestic spinning capacity without compromising manufacturers' access to competitively priced inputs.

Energy reliability presents another challenge that cotton diplomacy alone cannot resolve. Energy shortages have constrained textile production and cotton demand, and the US Department of Agriculture has revised Bangladesh's cotton import and consumption forecasts downwards. Even favourable sourcing arrangements cannot deliver their full benefits when factories face operational disruptions. Reliable energy, efficient logistics and predictable policies must therefore accompany international partnerships to translate cotton imports into export earnings.

Bangladesh is also rediscovering its agricultural potential. A long-term roadmap targets domestic production of 1.9 million cotton bales annually by 2050, supported by improved varieties, research, financing and cultivation in suitable regions. Although domestic production cannot entirely replace imports, it could diversify supply, support rural livelihoods, and reconnect Bangladesh's textile industry with its agricultural heritage. Such expansion must remain commercially viable and environmentally responsible, particularly where cotton cultivation competes with food production or limited water resources.

The future of textiles, however, will not be written in cotton alone. According to the International Cotton Advisory Committee (ICAC), synthetic fibres accounted for 71.7 percent of global fibre demand in 2025, underscoring the importance of product diversification. Bangladeshi brand Illiyeen's development of CottoCool, a cotton-based fabric designed for the country's climate, illustrates how material innovation can respond to consumer needs. Such initiatives demonstrate opportunities to move beyond conventional apparel manufacturing towards functional fabrics, specialised textiles and higher-value products that strengthen Bangladesh's competitive position.

Sustainability offers an opportunity to reshape the industry. Advances in cotton recycling and dye-removal technologies could help recover valuable fibres from textile waste, reducing resource consumption and creating new sources of raw materials. Bangladesh's indigenous jute industry provides an alternative pathway towards diversified materials, blended textiles and higher-value applications. Combining cotton, jute, recycled fibres and man-made materials could help Bangladesh build a more innovative and resilient textile economy while responding to changing global demand and sustainability expectations.

From Lincoln's America to Bengal's muslin looms, cotton has long connected economic fortunes with wider historical transformations. Today, Bangladesh stands at another such intersection, linking American and Brazilian cotton fields with domestic farmers, spinning mills, garment factories, and emerging technologies. The opportunity is to ensure that these connections reinforce one another through competitive sourcing, reliable infrastructure, stronger domestic capabilities, and diversified products. On World Cotton Day, Bangladesh can look beyond cotton imports and build stronger partnerships that support its farmers, strengthen its textile industry, and create greater value at home.

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Can ICT prosecutors turn press questions into a crime against humanity?

The question arises as the trial of three accused journalists is yet to begin



David Bergman is a journalist who has written about Bangladesh for many years. His X handle is @TheDavidBergman.

■ DAVID BERGMAN

Of the growing number of arrests at the International Crimes Tribunal (ICT) that look more like retribution than legitimate accountability, few seem as nakedly political as this one. Three journalists known for their sympathies towards the ousted ruling party—Mozammel Babu, Shyamal Dutta, and Farzana Rupa—are being held on crimes-against-humanity allegations over the questions and comments they had made at a press conference with Sheikh Hasina on July 14, 2024.

On Sunday, October 4, 2026, when asked why the three were implicated on such charges, ICT prosecutor Gazi Monawar Hossain Tamim said there were "specific allegations" against them. Earlier, on August 17, Tamim explained those in greater detail: "On July 14, 2024, at a press conference at Ganabhaban held by the then Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, several journalists, in the name of asking her questions, made some statements aimed at instigating her. In response to those statements, Sheikh Hasina called the protesters Razakars, children of Razakars, and grandchildren and great-grandchildren of Razakars."

He added: "Holding press conferences, or asking questions at press conferences, is the duty of journalists. But during that period, we saw that certain journalists would attend the then prime minister's press conferences, and the statements they made were not actually questions at all. They were praise of the then prime minister, and a kind of provocative instigation aimed at getting her to say certain things. That is why these offences were committed."

The prosecution's written "preliminary allegation" provides a little more detail, suggesting that the journalists' alleged instigation of Hasina led to the deaths of seven people on August 5, 2024.

Before examining why the prosecutors got it so wrong, it is important to acknowledge that between July 16 and August 5, 2024, law enforcement agencies killed hundreds of protesters and others in deliberate or arbitrary shootings. There are legitimate crimes-against-humanity prosecutions to be brought against those who ordered or carried out those killings, provided they rest on substantive evidence.

But nothing that happened at the July 14 press conference—nothing said by those journalists—provides a credible basis for their arrests on such grounds. To claim otherwise is to misapply the law and misuse the criminal justice process. ICT prosecutors appear to believe that any act or statement made by journalists between July 14 and August 5, 2024 can be treated as evidence of a crime against humanity, regardless of whether it constitutes criminal conduct. In doing so, the prosecutors are clearly stretching the law beyond its intended scope.



VISUAL: **ANWAR SOHEL**

Before examining why the prosecutors got it so wrong, it is important to acknowledge that between July 16 and August 5, 2024, law enforcement agencies killed hundreds of protesters and others in deliberate or arbitrary shootings. There are legitimate crimes-against-humanity prosecutions to be brought against those who ordered or carried out those killings, provided they rest on substantive evidence.

So what did the journalists actually say?

Shyamal Dutta, then editor of Bhorer Kagoj, did not even ask a question. Why the prosecutors named him at all is a mystery.

Mozammel Babu, then managing director and editor-in-chief of Ekattor TV, made three comments rather than asking questions. Only the first concerned the protests; the others dealt with media coverage of agreements signed during Hasina's China visit and the teachers' pension strike.

He said the protesters were "anti-constitution" and were "directly or indirectly [attacking] the freedom fighters, or [creating] division among them," and that "they are making our impressionable young people anti-court, anti-Liberation War, anti-constitution." But he ended: "These [young people] are actually victims. We can't be angry with them... They are victims of the evil tactics of these pseudo-intellectuals. We have to free them."

Some may agree with that view, others will not, but it is still a permissible opinion, and one that casts young agitators as "victims".

Ekattor TV journalist Farzana Rupa, unlike Babu, did ask a question. She raised the plight of a 1971 freedom fighter who had given evidence at the tribunal: "His wife has cancer. His own health is very bad. But there is no money for treatment. This is the condition of our freedom fighters even now." She then asked, "Is there anything this state can do [for him]?" She ended: "Those who are running the anti-quota movement want the whole solution from you. They don't want to go the court route. And the solution—as head of the executive—whether Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina will keep the quota or not keep the quota?"

Some may dislike its premise, but again this is a question that can be asked at a press conference. It neither calls for nor instigates violence. If ICT prosecutors think otherwise, any journalist in Bangladesh who asks a question at a press conference could similarly risk arrest or prosecution.

As part of her long digressive response, Sheikh Hasina then made a remark that went on to define the press conference. Asking why there was "so much resentment against the freedom fighters," she answered: "The freedom fighters' grandchildren won't get anything. Then, will the Razakars' grandchildren get it? That is my question. A question to the people of the country. That the Razakars' grandchildren will get everything, and the freedom fighters won't. What is their crime?"

This was taken to mean that the protesters were themselves the grandchildren of Razakars, those who collaborated with the Pakistan army in 1971. It triggered much larger protests, with students turning the insult around: "Who are you? Who am I? Razakar, Razakar! Who said so? The autocrat!"

The remark was provocative and insulting, and proved to be a monumental political mistake, strengthening the protests and winning them wider public support. But even if Hasina had gone further and directly called for violence—for example, by calling for the "Razakars' grandchildren" to be attacked—the journalist whose question elicited it could not be held criminally responsible for the answer. A journalist is not responsible for how a politician chooses to answer.

That the prosecution still sought to detain these three journalists on such allegations raises serious questions about the direction that the ICT prosecutors are taking. They are trying to persuade a tribunal created to try the gravest of crimes known to law to treat questions asked at a press conference as one of them. This comes on top of the crimes-against-humanity charges already brought against two of the three journalists over the May 2013 Shapla Chattar killings, based on the claim that a documentary broadcast after the killings made them complicit in the killings themselves.

When reporting or even questions put to politicians are recast as atrocity crimes, the ICT is no longer simply prosecuting crimes against humanity. It risks becoming an instrument for prosecuting journalism and pursuing those whose politics the prosecutors oppose.

One law for the powerful, another for the rest?



Barrister Mir Ahmad Bin Quasem (Arman) is member of parliament for Dhaka-14, member of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and adviser on foreign affairs to the leader of the opposition in parliament.

■ MIR AHMAD BIN QUASEM

As a member of parliament, I have spent this past week struggling to answer a question from the people of Dhaka-14: on what basis does this government decide whom to arrest, and how quickly?

On the night of September 24, more than 200 masked men, some carrying locally made weapons, entered the Radda MCH-FP Centre in Mirpur-1, in my constituency. They tied up the two security guards, looted equipment, medicines, vaccines and cash, and then brought in excavators to demolish the buildings. By morning, a shopkeepers' cooperative's signboard stood where the clinic had been. The centre was opened in 1974 at the initiative of Rädda Barnen, the Swedish section of Save the Children International, and for half a century it has served the poorest mothers and children of Mirpur with maternal care, immunisation and family planning. The centre says around 400 people came through its doors every day. A government-run measles-rubella vaccination campaign was due to begin there on September 26; health workers vaccinated children at a makeshift table beside the rubble.

The authorities did act. So far, 19 people have been arrested in connection with the attack. Meanwhile, the DMP commissioner ordered an inquiry into why police failed to respond despite a station being nearby, the OC of Shah Ali Police Station was withdrawn, and the home minister indicated last week that a local member of parliament in reserved seat was under investigation. But look at who is in custody: some of them are young men in their early 20s. An operation involving some 200 people and an excavator hired in advance was not planned by these men. Local residents and opposition leaders have been alleging the involvement of ruling party figures, including the above-mentioned lawmaker, who resigned from her post on October 1. Allegations are not proof, but allegations of this weight demand that a proper investigation travel upwards. More than a week on, those who planned, financed and stood to profit remain largely free.



The investigation into the Radda centre attack must be independent, time-bound and public, reaching beyond the hired hands to the planners and beneficiaries. FILE PHOTO: **PALASH KHAN**

The same weekend, an armed mob wrecked content creator Salman Muqtadir's studio near ECB Chattar. Salman alleged extortion; the home minister called it a land dispute. A case names 213 people, and eight people have been arrested so far. Yet, again, no one seems to ask who sent them in the first place.

Now consider the contrast. On October 1, umrah pilgrims arriving on a Biman flight from Medina waited at the baggage belt amid a shortage of trolleys and long delays for their luggage and Zamzam water. Among them was Major (retd) Akhtaruzzaman, a senior citizen, a freedom fighter and a two-time former MP. He lost his temper, and a video of the confrontation spread online.

A case was filed early the next morning under eight sections of the Penal Code, from obstructing public servants to criminal intimidation and assault. Detectives arrested Akhtaruzzaman at his home that same evening, and he has since been placed on remand. I will not pretend he behaved well. A man of his experience should have kept his composure, and losing his temper with officials, however exasperated he was, is open to fair criticism. But stretching an angry exchange over trolleys and luggage into a sweeping list of criminal charges looks less like law enforcement than a message to the opposition. For a senior citizen with a known address, the law offers summons and bail. Why did this case, of all cases, need the Detective Branch within a day and a half, and a remand?

What stirred so many who watched that video was not one man's outburst but its familiarity. What Akhtaruzzaman endured for a few hours is routine for migrant workers whose remittances have kept this economy afloat through every crisis. The airport's own lost and found records have shown an average of around three luggage thefts reported every day, and our social media feeds are full of returning workers weeping beside slit suitcases, years of savings gone. A government that aims to spend billions on aircraft purchase cannot keep enough trolleys at its own gateway. Most of these workers will never get anywhere near a policymaker. When did a baggage theft syndicate last face the Detective Branch within 36 hours? A state that can find a former MP at his home before nightfall is not short of capacity. It is short of will, and that will appears to be selective.

Put these cases side by side and a pattern emerges: the law moves swiftly against the opposition and the poor, and slowly, if at all, up the chain of political patronage. Land-grabbing, extortion and protection of criminals by the politically connected have become so ordinary that many young Bangladeshis now treat politics and crime as synonyms. That is the most dangerous lesson a generation can learn, because it tells them the only way to be safe is to be connected. This is precisely what the July uprising, the referendum and the constitutional reform were meant to end, through balance of power and institutional accountability. A two-thirds majority can use its strength to entrench those reforms, or it can bulldoze everything in its path, as majorities before it did.

The law moves swiftly against the opposition and the poor, and slowly, if at all, up the chain of political patronage. Land-grabbing, extortion and protection of criminals by the politically connected have become so ordinary that many young Bangladeshis now treat politics and crime as synonyms. That is the most dangerous lesson a generation can learn, because it tells them the only way to be safe is to be connected.

What is needed is not complicated. The Radda investigation must be independent, time-bound and public, reaching the planners and beneficiaries rather than stopping at the hired hands, and the centre must be restored at the expense of those responsible. Police inaction in politically linked crimes deserves independent scrutiny, so that response times do not depend on the party colour of a suspect. The airport needs a working grievance and compensation system, published data on baggage theft, enough trolleys for peak arrivals, and a dedicated desk for returning workers. And parliament should examine whether equal treatment under the law exists in practice; the opposition stands ready to work with the government on it.

This nation was given a rare chance at a new beginning; it would be a tragedy to waste it repeating the habits that brought us to the brink. Those who refuse to learn from history are condemned to repeat it. In Mirpur, the vaccines came back before the walls did, because ordinary people refused to abandon their community. The least the state can do is show that the law, too, is still standing, and that it stands equally for all.



PHOTO: COLLECTED

MOSHARRAF KARIM reminisces a life gone by

SHAH ALAM SHAZU

For Mosharraf Karim, some of the most precious chapters of his life have little to do with fame. They belong to a time when long conversations stretched late into the day, when theatre rehearsals were reached on foot, when friends gathered simply to talk, and when the value of an evening was measured not by productivity but by the people sitting beside you.

Today, Mosharraf Karim is one of the busiest and most popular actors in television drama. For years, he has remained at the top of the industry, while his acclaimed performances on OTT platforms and in films have further cemented his reputation as one of the country's most versatile actors. His popularity has also travelled beyond Bangladesh, particularly to Kolkata, where he has built a strong following and appeared in Indian Bengali films.

Yet, during an informal conversation at The Daily Star office recently, it was not his fame or achievements that occupied his thoughts. Instead, he found himself returning to the past – to friendships, theatre, adda and the people who made those years special.

"I love hanging out and having conversations. I really enjoy adda," Mosharraf Karim said.

During the early years of his theatre career, adda was an important part of his life. Hours would disappear in conversation, surrounded by friends and fellow artistes.

"I spent a lot of time in adda during the early days of my theatre career. I still make time for it whenever I can. But the adda doesn't have the same life in it anymore. I don't think I will ever get those beautiful moments back," he said.

"Whenever I look back on my past, I remember those golden days. I think I will never get that life back. It feels like that was what life was truly meant to be,"

When Mosharraf Karim thinks about those days, one name inevitably comes to mind – the late popular rhymester Obaidul Gani Chandon.

"Whenever I think about the memories of those adda sessions, I remember Chandon. I miss him," he said. "Chandon was the one who kept our adda lively. We have hundreds of memories from those gatherings and from the journey we shared together."

Those gatherings also brought together actor Fazlul Kabir Tuhin, lyricist and rhymester Bakiul Alam, Obaidul Gani Chandon and Mosharraf Karim.

As he speaks about those years, there is a distinct sense of longing in his voice. "Whenever I look back on my past, I remember those golden days. I think I will never get that life back. It feels like that was what life was truly meant to be," he shared.

Before television and OTT made him a household name, Mosharraf Karim was a theatre actor committed to the craft. He remains one of the prominent members of Natyakendra, the theatre troupe founded three decades ago under the leadership of Tariq Anam Khan.

Away from the stage and screen, Mosharraf Karim finds another kind of escape in books. He reads extensively, particularly fiction and novels, and occasionally writes poetry himself. He said, "I love reading poetry. I also love stories and novels. I try to make time for reading. Right now, I am reading Mihir Sengupta's ***Siddhiganjer Mokam***. I am really enjoying it."

Perhaps one of the most unusual memories Mosharraf Karim carries from his career came not from an acting performance, but from poetry.

Several years ago, renowned Indian poet Joy Goswami wrote a poem about him. The poem was later published in a prominent newspaper in Bangladesh. For Mosharraf Karim, the memory remains special.

"Joy Goswami is one of my favourite poets. I am a great admirer of his poetry," he said. "When a poet of his stature wrote a poem about me, I was both surprised and deeply moved. It was a great honour for me."

Taylor Swift's 'Patient Zero' debuts at No 1 on Billboard global charts



Taylor Swift has debuted at No 1 on both Billboard global song charts with ***Patient Zero***, marking another major chart milestone. The track becomes her eighth Global 200 chart-topper, tying BTS for the most No 1s since the chart launched in 2020. It also gives Swift her fifth No 1 on the Global Excl. US chart, the most among solo artistes.

Patient Zero is one of four new tracks from the deluxe album ***The Life of a Showgirl: The Encore***. ***Cleveland!***, ***Babylon*** and ***Pink Clouding*** also entered the top 10 of both global charts. Swift now has a record 47 Global 200 top-10 entries, surpassing Drake's previous mark of 45, while extending her Global Excl. US record to 34.

EVENTS

'Tobuo Prem Ashe'

Hunt Theatre is set to stage its new play ***Tobuo Prem Ashe***, following the warm response to its debut production ***Café de Volte***. Written and directed by Diana Meriline, the play explores love and the relationship between two mature individuals who become each other's comfort, refuge and source of trust. It looks at love beyond expectations and calculations, presenting it as a natural part of everyday life. The cast includes Sarah Jabin Aditi, Supti Das Chaity, Diana Meriline, Neon Ahsan, Saim Bin Mujib and Jerome Progga Modhu.

Date: Today | October 7
Time: 6:00pm & 7:30pm
Venue: Studio Theatre Hall, BSA



NEWS

RU keeps failing to stop campus violence

FROM PAGE 12

allegedly pushed past him and beat the students.

Mahin was attacked again as Assistant Proctor Prof Gias Uddin and senior teachers were taking him to hospital. He was pulled from an ambulance and beaten before police intervened.

On June 18, journalists Maruf Hossain Mishon, Zubair Jisan and Abu Bakar Anik, along with Rucsu leaders SM Salman Sabbir and Imran Laskar, were assaulted near Rabindranath Tagore Academic Building for filming alleged ragging.

Prof Mahbubur and Marketing Department Chairman Prof Md Borak Ali went to the scene to mediate, but the group was assaulted on the way to the proctor's office.

On May 27, 2025, members of the Anti-Shahbagh Union, described in reports as mostly RU Shibir members, clashed with left-leaning activists at Paribahan Chattar while proctorial officials were present.

Assistant Proctor Prof Nasir Uddin later said, "The proctorial body tried to control the situation, but it got out of hand."

On November 18, 2024, students of the Law and Marketing departments clashed after a football match, leaving at least 30 injured, including teacher Mahfuzur Rahman and journalist Abu Saleh Shoaib.

Shoaib alleged that Marketing Department students beat him while he was filming. University officials and teachers tried to intervene, but the clashes continued until police and army personnel were deployed.

The RU incidents come amid a broader rise in political violence and attacks on journalists nationwide.

The Human Rights Support Society recorded 830 incidents of political violence from January to June, up from 529 in the same period a year earlier. It also documented 200 incidents involving 383 journalists, compared with 152 incidents involving 257 journalists in the same period last year.

NO ACCOUNTABILITY

Shamin Tripura, a member of the RU unit of the Democratic Students' Alliance, said students had expected a democratic environment after 2024, but the administration had failed to tackle violence effectively.

"Since those involved are repeatedly getting away without facing consequences, no effective action is being taken. That is why we are seeing attacks on political activists and journalists."

Shah Poran, a journalism student at RU, said, "If the administration had ensured punishment for those responsible, these incidents would not have been repeated. From that perspective, the administration and the proctorial body have completely failed."

Prof A Al Mamun of the Mass Communication and Journalism Department alleged that some university administrations and right-wing teachers were complicit in allowing student organisations to act with impunity. He also said political allegiance in proctorial appointments could lead to bias.

"There should be no political blindness. We need to move away from the culture of political allegiance and nepotism that has been practised for a long time."

Several university inquiries have faced lengthy delays. As of August 1, three committees formed to investigate separate incidents involving Rucsu GS Salahuddin Ammar had yet to submit reports, although two had been formed more than a year earlier. University authorities attributed the delays to procedural reasons.

Contacted for comment, RU Pro-Vice Chancellor (Administration) Prof Md Abdul Alim declined to comment.

The Daily Star also tried to reach RU Vice-Chancellor Prof Md Faridul Islam by phone, but he did not respond. This newspaper also visited his office but could not meet him.

Flees from court, gets arrested, then does it again

FROM PAGE 12

same charge of allegedly resisting lawful apprehension.

"Shariful was produced before the court for a hearing in the case filed over his earlier escape. He was standing inside the dock after Dhaka Metropolitan Magistrate Md Jamshed Alam concluded the hearing," said Md Morshed Alam, in-charge of the lockup at the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's Court.

The accused loosened his handcuffs while in the dock and fled the scene around 12:30pm, said Mohiuddin Mahmud Sohel, deputy commissioner of the Prosecution Division of the Dhaka Metropolitan Police.

Police constable Abdul Alim was suspended over the incident and a three-member committee has been formed to investigate the matte.

The committee has been asked to submit the report in three days, Sohel said.

Toyota wants to build cars

FROM PAGE 2

He also highlighted the potential of waste-to-energy and renewable energy in Bangladesh, saying the government will provide necessary support if Toyota Tsusho is interested in investing in these sectors.

The delegation said its plan to expand Toyota Bangladesh's distribution network to all divisional cities is already underway.

The expansion is aimed at making Toyota's services and operations more accessible across the country.

The company also informed the prime minister that Toyota Bangladesh will begin work in 2027 to establish a Hybrid Electric Vehicle (HEV) manufacturing industry in an economic zone under the development vision of "With Bangladesh, for Bangladesh", with full-scale production targeted for 2029.

Toyota also expressed interest in contributing to human resources development in Bangladesh, particularly by creating technical and vocational training opportunities for young people, enhancing their skills and developing a workforce suited to future industries.

Commerce Minister Khandakar Abdul Muktadir, Prime Minister's Adviser on Finance and Planning Dr Rashed Al Mahmud Titumir, State Minister for Foreign Affairs Humaiun Kobir, Prime Minister's Adviser on Science and Technology Rehan Asif Asad and Prime Minister's Special Assistant for Overseas Employment Affairs in the Asia-Pacific Region Dr Md Shakirul Islam Khan, among others, attended the meeting.

Toyota Tsusho Mobility Division CEO Shigeru Harada, President of Toyota Bangladesh Ltd Premmit Singh and other senior officials of the company were also present.

Russia downplays plague reports

FROM PAGE 2

plague from a broken test tube.

Other media reported a possible link between her death and a lab accident at the facility.

The People of Baikal outlet also said up to 200 people with whom she may have had contact were under quarantine.

But Russian officials said postmortem tests had not detected the disease.

Time for urgent, bold reforms

FROM PAGE 1

While other reforms remain important, advancing these priorities would address some of the most binding constraints to growth and development at present.

The financial sector vulnerabilities have intensified and pose growing systemic risks.

Greater disclosure and closer alignment of regulatory policies on loan classification, provisioning and governance with international standards have revealed previously underreported defaulted loans and significant undercapitalisation across the banking sector, particularly among state-owned and Islamic banks.

Yet, the progress on financial sector reforms remains slow, the WB said.

Restoring banking sector stability requires swift and decisive action.

Specifically, completing asset quality reviews, enforcing time-bound bank restructuring based on viability and burden sharing, and strengthening governance and transparency through legal and regulatory reforms.

The Bangladesh Bank completed asset quality reviews of six Islamic banks, but additional reviews are progressing slowly.

Phasing out regulatory forbearance and improving the framework for resolving default loans are equally critical.

Clarifying how the deposit protection fund can be used and establishing a formal emergency liquidity assistance framework are essential to rebuilding confidence and safeguarding financial stability.

Finally, removing policy distortions that limit banks' ability to lend effectively, including the cap on lending spreads, would allow credit to be allocated more efficiently across the economy.

The reinstatement of a 4 percent ceiling on banks' intermediation spread in June 2026 also marks a reversal of the market-based interest rate framework introduced in May 2024.

Meanwhile, reforms to strengthen revenue mobilisation have been limited in fiscal 2025-26, including the separation of tax policy formulation from tax administration.

Separation of tax policymaking from tax administration is a key priority to enable tax policies that are designed more strategically and implemented more effectively, the WB said.

Revenue collection can be strengthened by modernising tax administration through greater digitalisation, integrated taxpayer databases and better use of data to improve compliance.

At the same time, the government should review and gradually phase out poorly targeted tax exemptions and incentives that reduce revenues without delivering sufficient economic benefits.

Simplifying the VAT system through a more uniform structure, broader coverage, and modern digital filing and invoicing systems would improve both efficiency and compliance.

Strengthening the administration of income, corporate, and property taxes would broaden the tax base, reduce informality, and help increase revenues without relying on higher tax rates.

Progress in implementing the Tax Expenditure Management Policy Framework was also limited, with no comprehensive tax expenditure report published last fiscal year as required by the policy.

Mandatory electronic filing of tax returns and compulsory use of the A Challan system to streamline revenue payments are notable developments.

Addressing Bangladesh's energy challenges requires a combination of measures to improve energy security, strengthen sector governance and reduce the economy's exposure to costly fuel imports.

Expanding domestic gas production, improving LNG infrastructure and diversifying fuel sources would help reduce supply risks and strengthen energy security.

At the same time, increasing investment in transmission and distribution networks is critical to reduce bottlenecks, improve the reliability of electricity supply and lower system losses.

Over the medium term, Bangladesh can lower its dependence on imported fuels by promoting renewable energy, energy storage and energy efficiency investments through transparent and competitive procurement processes.

Expanding regional power trade and encouraging greater private sector participation would further improve efficiency and attract investment.

Sustaining these improvements will require stronger sector governance, including greater regulatory independence, improved utility performance, integrated planning and a transparent pricing framework that gradually aligns energy prices with actual costs.

ASI withdrawn after 'remarks on taking bribes'

FROM PAGE 12

circulated on social media.

In the nearly one-minute video, Ilias is purportedly heard saying, "There is no smoke without fire, you know? Do you get what I mean?

"If I claimed that I was a police officer who did not take bribes, or that I was the imam of Baitul Mukarram, would anyone believe me?"

He reportedly said, "I bought this uniform with bribe money, specifically to take bribes."

The remarks have drawn criticism on social media, with viewers questioning corruption within the police force.

Mohammad Saiful Islam, officer-in-charge of Chunarughat Police Station, said he had seen the video clip and that the authorities were verifying the incident.

Contacted, ASI Ilias refused to comment on the video.

ASP Rafiur Rahman, who has been tasked with probing the incident, said he was working on it and would provide details later.

Biman-Airbus deal likely today

FROM PAGE 12

attend the event.

During yesterday's meeting, Millat said Lufthansa could also work with Biman to develop skilled human resources in Bangladesh.

The minister also sought Germany's cooperation in removing the European Union's High Risk Cargo and Mail status on cargo originating from Bangladesh, which has remained in place since 2017.

He said the government had taken measures to address security concerns and referred to a recent security audit in which Dhaka's Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport and Sylhet's Osmani International Airport scored more than 90 percent.

The two sides also discussed air connectivity between Bangladesh and Germany, Biman's development, and cooperation in the tourism sector.

Both sides expressed interest in expanding bilateral cooperation in aviation and tourism, said the release.

The 10 Airbus planes are four A350-900 wide-body aircraft and six A321neo narrow-body jets, said officials familiar with the development.

Biman earlier signed deals with Boeing to procure 25 aircraft from the US company.

Man dies as AC compressor explodes at repair shop

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A 26-year-old employee died after an air conditioner compressor exploded at a repair shop in Dhaka's Nayapaltan area yesterday.

The deceased was identified as Jibon Bormon.

The incident occurred around 10:30am at a shop named "MI Engineering Plus". Jibon was taken to Dhaka Medical College Hospital, where doctors declared him dead at 11:45am.

Inspector Md Habibur Rahman, in-charge of the DMCH police outpost, said the body has been kept at the hospital morgue for an autopsy.

Shop owner Biplob Chandra Das said he runs a fridge and AC repair shop on the ground floor of a building in Nayapaltan, while the employees live on the first floor.

Jibon, who joined the shop just a few days ago, was alone on the premises when the compressor exploded, Biplob added.

Khulna district sees 33 killings in nine months

FROM PAGE 3

Police data show 11 of the 33 cases, or one-third, stemmed from family conflicts.

Seven people were killed by gunfire, accounting for 21.2 percent of all murders, while nine other cases were linked to drugs, theft or snatching, or unknown causes.

Police said they had solved 25 cases so far, leaving eight unresolved.

Recent incidents indicate that the violence has continued into October.

On October 4, Nasimul Karim Nasim, 55, was shot dead by two assailants after leaving his house to have tea in Dighalia.

Police said Nasim, a regional leader of the Purbo Banglar Communist Party, had five murder cases and an arms case filed against him, along with several other cases in Khulna and elsewhere. Police are yet to establish the motive for his killing.

On September 28, the bullet-hit body of Bappi, alias "Kolom Bappi", 32, was recovered from a fish enclosure in Mominbagh, Rupsha.

Police said Bappi had several cases, including murder and robbery, filed against him in Dhaka, Ashulia and elsewhere. Investigators are considering a drug-related dispute or other possible motives.

Gouranga Nandy, vice-president of the Khulna unit of Shushashoner Jonno Nagorik, said the law-and-order situation in Khulna city and the district was deteriorating, leaving people without a sense of security.

"Police activity has been insufficient to prevent such crimes. Also, many accused persons are securing bail and becoming involved in criminal activities again," he said.

Khulna Superintendent of Police Sarker Omar Faroque said, "We have been conducting drives in different locations since last night to apprehend suspects. We have made significant progress regarding the two recent incidents."

"We will conduct combing operations in the Rupsha, Terokhada, Dighalia and Batiaghata upazilas. Plans are also underway to conduct joint operations with other law enforcement agencies. We remain vigilant to ensure that no further killings occur," he added.

Echoes of the past from Rajshahi chars

FROM PAGE 3

are completed, it plans to organise a special exhibition featuring the collection.

The artefacts will later be made accessible to history enthusiasts and researchers at the museum's History and Classical Art Gallery, officials said.

Monirul Hoque said they would not immediately be displayed for general visitors because of a shortage of gallery space.

"We will make them accessible to everyone in the future if the capacity of the gallery is increased," he said.

Seven years on, case still stuck in appeals

FROM PAGE 3

tribunal's verdict on March 16, 2025, confirming the death sentences of 20 and life imprisonment for five others after hearing the death references and appeals.

The killing took place on the night of October 7, 2019, when Chhatra League leaders and activists called Abrar to Room 2011 of BUET's Sher-e-Bangla Hall and beat him to death. His body was recovered from the dormitory staircase early the next morning.

The following day, Abrar's father, Barkat Ullah, filed a murder case with Chawkbazar Police Station. Following an investigation, police submitted a charge sheet against 25 people.

According to the investigation, Abrar was called to the room over a Facebook post in which he criticised various agreements between Bangladesh and India.

His murder triggered countrywide outrage and student protests at BUET and other universities, sparking debate over campus student politics and political influence in educational institutions.

Following the student movement, BUET authorities banned all forms of organisational student politics on campus. The killing also prompted widespread demands for greater student safety in residential halls, an end to ragging and torture, and campuses free from political interference.

DSCC starts dredging work at Dhanmondi

FROM PAGE 3

Minister Rabiul Alam, also the local lawmaker, said the prime minister had approved two projects for Dhanmondi Lake -- one for sludge removal and another for overall renovation as per detailed design.

He urged visitors and local residents to help protect the lake's environment.

The DSCC administrator announced plans for a modern open-air cultural and recreational centre named "Nazrul Sarobar", modelled on the Rabindra Sarobar concept, as part of DSCC's Tk 75 crore plan to restore Dhanmondi Lake and turn it into a modern recreational destination.

Of the total allocation, Tk 50 crore will be spent on renovating the lake and related infrastructure, while Tk 25 crore will go towards constructing Nazrul Chattar (Bidrohi Chattar).

The Nazrul Chattar cultural complex will be developed on 50.967 kathas opposite the Kazi Nazrul Islam Institute in Dhanmondi.

Dengue deaths hit 281, third highest

FROM PAGE 3

delayed diagnosis and changes in the clinical presentation of dengue were contributing to severe cases and deaths.

People previously infected with dengue could face a higher risk of severe illness during subsequent infections, he said.

"Dengue has four serotypes. When people are infected for the first time, they often do not realise that they have dengue. They may mistake the symptoms for influenza or another common illness and recover without serious complications," he said.

However, subsequent infections can be more severe, particularly when a person contracts dengue for the second, third or fourth time, he added.

Prof Abdullah said dengue had also become harder to recognise early as many patients now develop mild or non-specific symptoms, such as a low-grade fever lasting one or two days, body aches, a runny nose or cough.

As a result, patients may ignore the symptoms and seek medical attention only after their condition deteriorates.

"The problem is that patients often do not realise that they have dengue. By the time they are diagnosed, their condition may have become serious, leaving doctors with limited options," said medicine specialist Dr ABM Abdullah.

"The problem is that patients often do not realise that they have dengue. By the time they are diagnosed, their condition may have become serious, leaving doctors with limited options," he said.

He urged people to undergo dengue testing if they develop fever, body aches, headache, cold or other mild symptoms while dengue is circulating.

Prof HM Nazmul Ahsan, associate professor at Shaheed Suhrawardy Medical College Hospital, raised concerns over inconsistent application of national dengue treatment guidelines.

He said treatment should be tailored to each patient's clinical condition and that a low platelet count alone did not necessarily warrant a platelet transfusion.

"Unnecessary platelet transfusions, inappropriate fluid administration and excessive fluid loading can themselves contribute to complications and, in severe cases, death," he said.

Prof Nazmul also called for more accessible dengue testing facilities, particularly for low-income communities in urban and rural areas.

Strong children

FROM PAGE 3

their preference," he said.

Tarique said the government recently organised a primary school-level football competition, featuring around 2.2 million children.

He also recalled the "Notun Kuri" programme introduced by Shaheed President Ziaur Rahman to nurture children's cultural talents, saying the government had revived it while launching similar initiatives in sports.

The PM announced plans to introduce opportunities for children to learn a third language alongside Bangla and English, potentially including Arabic, Mandarin and German.

He said academic achievement, sports, cultural activities or learning several languages alone would not be enough.

"Dear little friends, you have many responsibilities. You have to be humane."

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Bangladesh Police
Office of the Superintendent of Police, Rangamati Hill District

Memo No: RMT/Ration/2026-2027/5129(16)1st volume Date:06.10.2026

e-Tender Notice

E-Tender is invited through the National e-GP System Portal (http://www.eprocure.gov.bd) for the procurement of the following packages:

Tender ID No	Package No	Description of package	Last Selling Date and Time	Closing and Opening Date & Time
1348049	RMT/Rs/Oil/ 26-27/OTM/02	Supply of fortified Soybean oil to distribute to the rationees of Rangamati Hill District Police (2nd Quarter), FY 2026-2027 Re-Tender. **Re-Tender**	14 October 2026 16:30	15 October 2026 12:00

This is an online tender in which only e-Tender will be accepted through the National e-GP Portal. No offline/hard copies will be accepted. To submit an e-Tender, registration in the National e-GP system portal (http://www.eprocure.gov.bd) is required. The fees for downloading the e-Tender documents from the National e-GP portal must be deposited online through any scheduled bank for e-GP. Further information and guidelines are available on the National e-GP system portal and from e-GP help desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd)

6.10.2026
(Muhd. Abdur Rakib, PPM)
BP-7906109240
Superintendent of Police
Rangamati Hill District.
Phone-02333372456, Fax-02333372456
E-mail: sprangamati@police.gov.bd

GD-2425

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Office of the Commissioner of Taxes
Taxes Zone-2, Chattogram
CGO Building-1 (2nd Floor), Agrabad, Chattogram.

Reference No.: 4-B9/2026/523 Date: 06/10/2026

e-Tender Notice (e-GP)

e-Tender is invited in the National e-GP system Portal (http://www.eprocure.gov.bd) for the procurement of physical service mentioned in the table below:

Sl No.	Tender ID No.	Package No. & Description	Last Selling Date & Time	Closing Date & Time
01	1346041	Procurement of Advertising Items	18 October-2026 15.00	18 October-2026 16.00
02	1346043	Procurement of Computer Consumables Items	18 October-2026 15.00	18 October-2026 16.00
03	1346044	Procurement of Printing and Binding Items	18 October-2026 15.00	18 October-2026 16.00
04	1346045	Procurement of Office Stationary items	18 October-2026 15.00	18 October-2026 16.00
05	1346047	Procurement of ICT items	18 October-2026 15.00	18 October-2026 16.00
06	1346048	Procurement of Computer and Related Accessories	18 October-2026 15.00	18 October-2026 16.00
07	1346049	Procurement of Office Equipment	18 October-2026 15.00	18 October-2026 16.00
08	1346050	Procurement of Office Furniture	18 October-2026 15.00	18 October-2026 16.00

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. The fees for the downloading the e-Tender Documents form the National e-GP System Portal have to be deposited online through any registered Bank.
4. Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP System Portal and e-GP Help Desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd).
5. Authority reserve the right to accept any tender or reject any or all tenders without assigning any reason.

06.10.26
(MD. NAJMUL HUDA)
Deputy Commissioner of Taxes
Headquarters (Admin)
Taxes Zone-02, Chattogram,
CGO Building-1 (2nd Floor), Agrabad, Chattogram .
Phone No: 02-333315572

GD-2424

Government of the People`s Republic of Bangladesh
Local Government Engineering Department
Office of the Executive Engineer
District: Bhola
www.lged.gov.bd

e-Tender Notice: 12/2026-2027

Memo No: 46.02.0900.000.012.26- 2461 Date:06/10/2026

e-Tender is invited in the National e-GP System Portal (http://www.eprocure.gov.bd) for the procurement of the work stated below:

SL. No	Tender ID	Package No & Description	Type, Method	Tender Publication Date and Time	Last Selling Date and Time	Last Submission of Tender Security Date and Time	Closing and Opening Time and Date
1	1342774	CAFDRIRP/Bhola/AM/VR/W-102/2026-27 Rehabilitation of Charkali GPS-Abdul Latif Bowaly Register p/school Road from Ch.00-1425m Under Sadar Upazila. Dist. Bhola. (Road ID No. 509185064).	NCT OTM	07-Oct-2026 09:00	26-Oct-2026 14:00	27-Oct-2026 11:00	27-Oct-2026 12:00

This is an online Tender, where only e-Tender shall be accepted in the National e-GP portal and no offline/hard copies shall be accepted. The fees for downloading the e-Tender Documents from the National e-GP System Portal have to be deposited online through any registered Banks branches. Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP System Portal and from e-GP help desk (http://www.eprocure.gov.bd).

Signed: -
(Sheikh Tareq Jaman)
Executive Engineer
LGED, Bhola.
E-mail: xen.bhola@lged.gov.bd

GD-2422

Bangladesh Freedom Fighters' Welfare Trust
Commerce & Development Department
Swadhinata Bhaban
88, Motijheel Commercial Area, Dhaka-1000

Re-Tender Notice for Renting Space along with Infrastructure

Sealed tenders are invited in sealed envelopes from interested Office/Importers/Exporters/Manufacturers - related or Labor-intensive business enterprises for renting unrented space of 32,025 sq. ft. (more or less) and the structures located therein for a period of 03 (three) years, owned by Circo Soap & Chemical Industries Limited, an enterprise of Bangladesh Freedom Fighters' Welfare Trust. Detailed information is provided in the tender schedule.

1.	Ministry/Division	Ministry of Liberation War Affairs.
2.	Agency	Bangladesh Freedom Fighters' Welfare Trust.
3.	Description of Tender	Proposals/Tenders are invited for renting unrented space of 32,025 sq. ft. (more or less) and the structures located therein for a period of 03 (three) years at Circo Soap & Chemical Industries Limited (273-276, Tejgaon Industrial Area, Dhaka-1208), an enterprise of Bangladesh Freedom Fighters Welfare Trust.
4.	Tender Memo No and Date:	48.01.0000.201.02.012.26.225; Date:06/10/2026
5.	Tender Security	BDT 2,50,000/- (Two Lakh Fifty Thousand only) Taka (Refundable) must be submitted with the tender in the form of a Pay Order from any scheduled bank of Bangladesh in favor of Bangladesh Freedom Fighters' Welfare Trust.
6.	Price of Tender Schedule	BDT 1,000/- (Taka One Thousand only) (Non-refundable).
7.	Place of Sale for Tender Schedule	Finance Department, Bangladesh Freedom Fighters' Welfare Trust, Swadhinata Bhaban (3rd Floor), 88 Motijheel C/A, Dhaka.
8.	Date and Time for Sale of Tender Schedule	From 08/10/2026 to 26/10/2026 (during official working hours).
9.	Places for Submission of Tender	(A) Commerce & Development Department (2nd Floor), Bangladesh Muktijoddha Kalyan Trust, 88 Motijheel C/A, Dhaka-1000. (B) Office of the Deputy Secretary (Administration), Level-5, Room No-604, Ministry of Liberation War Affairs, Transport Pool Building, Secretariat Link Road, Dhaka.
10.	Last Date and Time for Tender Submission	Up to 27/10/2026 till 2:00 PM.
11.	Date and Time for Opening of Tender	27/10/2026 at 3:00 PM.
12.	Name & Designation of the Tender Inviter	Md. Shazzadul Islam, Deputy Director (C & D), Bangladesh Freedom Fighters' Welfare Trust.
13.	Trust Authority reserves the complete right to accept or reject any or all tenders at any stage.	

06.10.2026
Md. Shazzadul Islam
Deputy Director (C & D)

GD-2419

LAW BOOK REVIEW

The Worker at the End of the Supply Chain

FOWZUL AZIM



Fowzul Azim is a Legal Analyst and Researcher.

Globalization has a habit of making people disappear.

We see the container ship, but not the hands that packed the box. We see the global brand, but rarely the worker who stitched the shirt. We celebrate exports, foreign investment and integration into world markets, while the human being at the far end of the supply chain is often reduced to a statistic.

Abdullah Al Faruque's *Globalization and Labour Rights: Lessons from the Experiences of Bangladesh* attempts to reverse this disappearance. The book begins with a deceptively simple premise: globalization is not merely an economic phenomenon. It is also a story about power, law and work. As capital, technology and production cross borders, the boundaries of the workplace and the nation-state become increasingly porous. For workers, this can mean opportunity and insecurity at the same time-new jobs alongside precarious employment, and greater participation in the global economy alongside diminished bargaining power.

For Bangladesh, few questions are more consequential. Over several decades, Bangladesh has moved deeply into the global economy through trade liberalisation, foreign investment and export-oriented production. This transformation has generated employment and increased women's participation in paid work. Yet it has also brought informalisation, insecure employment and new forms of vulnerability. Dr. Faruque wisely avoids presenting globalization as either salvation or catastrophe. Its consequences, he argues, depend substantially on the institutions that govern it.

That refusal to offer an easy verdict is one of the book's principal virtues. Across 12 chapters, the author examines industrial relations, labour-law institutions, export processing zones, trade unions, collective bargaining, minimum wages, dispute settlement, international labour standards, social dialogue, post-Rana Plaza initiatives and migrant workers. The subjects are diverse, but they converge on one question: how can workers exercise meaningful rights when the economic forces shaping their working lives increasingly operate beyond national borders?

Bangladesh's ready-made garment industry provides the clearest window into this dilemma. The sector has become one of the country's defining links with the global economy, creating employment on a vast scale and transforming the lives of millions, particularly women. But its success has also exposed the fault lines of global production: low wages, long hours, unsafe workplaces and restrictions on labour rights. The garments sold in affluent markets may travel thousands of miles from factories where workers have little influence over the price, timetable or conditions of production.

Dr. Faruque's discussion of global supply chains is especially revealing because it exposes the geography of value. Bangladesh largely occupies the lower-value stages of production-cutting, making, trimming and shipping-while design, branding, logistics and retail intelligence tend to sit elsewhere. The supply chain is therefore global not only in distance but also in power.

This is where the book moves beyond conventional labour-law analysis. The traditional model-state, employer, worker and union operating within a national framework-has been unsettled by multinational corporations, international buyers, private compliance schemes, transnational unions and multi-stakeholder organisations. Labour governance is no longer confined neatly within national borders.



Abdullah Al Faruque, Globalization and Labour Rights: Lessons from the Experiences of Bangladesh, Palgrave Macmillan/Springer Nature, 2026

The Rana Plaza disaster remains the darkest symbol of this transformation. In 2013, the collapse of Rana Plaza killed more than 1,000 workers and forced the world to confront the human foundations of an industry whose products were sold far beyond Bangladesh. In its aftermath came initiatives including the Accord and the Alliance, alongside wider efforts to improve factory safety and supply-chain governance. Dr. Faruque examines these developments as experiments in transnational and private regulation, raising a larger question: who should bear responsibility for labour conditions when a supply chain stretches across continents?

Yet the book does not confine the labour question to the garment factory. One of its important insights is that the most vulnerable worker may be the one who never enters the formal workplace. Informal employment dominates Bangladesh's labour market, according to the figures cited in the book, leaving a huge proportion of workers outside the effective reach of formal employment protections. Such workers may lack secure wages, fixed hours, paid leave, occupational safety and meaningful representation.

The emerging gig economy adds another layer of uncertainty. Digital platforms, freelancing, ride-sharing and delivery services may offer flexibility, but they raise familiar questions in new forms: Who is the employer? Who bears responsibility for social security? What constitutes a fair wage when the worker is technically independent? The technology may be new; the struggle over power and protection is not.

Trade unions consequently occupy an uneasy place in this landscape. Globalisation can weaken unions by fragmenting production and employment, encouraging subcontracting and eroding the standard employment relationship. Yet it can also create possibilities for transnational worker solidarity. If capital can organise across borders, labour may increasingly need to learn to do the same.

The discussion of international labour standards adds another layer. Bangladesh has ratified most of the ILO's core conventions, and many international principles have found recognition in domestic law. Yet the distance between legal recognition and everyday enforcement remains substantial. Informality, weak enforcement, inadequate resources and precarious employment complicate the translation of rights from paper into practice.

Bangladesh's ready-made garment industry provides the clearest window into this dilemma. The sector has become one of the country's defining links with the global economy, creating employment on a vast scale and transforming the lives of millions, particularly women. But its success has also exposed the fault lines of global production: low wages, long hours, unsafe workplaces and restrictions on labour rights.

Dr. Faruque's treatment of human rights due diligence gives the book a particularly contemporary edge. Developments in the UK, France, Australia and Germany, as well as the European Union, increasingly require companies to identify, prevent and address human-rights risks in their supply chains. For Bangladeshi exporters, compliance is therefore becoming more than a voluntary exercise in corporate responsibility; it is increasingly part of a wider regulatory expectation.

The book's breadth is both its strength and, occasionally, its limitation. Its wide-ranging treatment means that some subjects receive more conceptual than empirical attention. Yet that breadth is also what makes the work valuable. Labour law does not exist in a vacuum. Workers' rights are shaped by trade policy, corporate structures, migration regimes, technology, union strength and the ability of public institutions to enforce the law.

Ultimately, *Globalization and Labour Rights* is less a verdict on globalization than an invitation to see it differently. The book reminds us that markets do not write labour law; institutions do. Globalization may create jobs and opportunities, but without effective institutions it can also distribute its risks disproportionately to those least able to bear them.

The irony is that the more interconnected the world becomes, the easier it can be to forget the individual worker within the machinery of connection. Dr. Faruque's achievement is to put that worker back into the picture.

In the end, the book asks a question that reaches far beyond Bangladesh: when the world's economy becomes global, can justice remain local? Its answer is not simple. But its warning is clear: unless rights travel as far as capital does, the promise of globalization will remain incomplete.

LAW WATCH

Bangladesh's measles crisis and the question of legal responsibility

IRNA JAHAN SHEJUTI

Measles is amongst the most preventable diseases known to medicine. A single vaccine, dosed twice, prevents it in the overwhelming majority of children. So, when nearly a thousand children have died of measles in a nationwide outbreak since March this year, coinciding with the steepest decline in Bangladesh's vaccine coverage, from nearly 99.7 per cent as recently as in 2021 to roughly 56–59 per cent by 2025, well below the 95 per cent threshold needed to interrupt transmission, one must ask: was this risk foreseeable, and if so, did the state do enough to avert it?

In fact, in early September, the High Court Division (HCD) of the Supreme Court of Bangladesh (SCOB) has issued a rule asking why the family of a measles victim should not receive Tk 1 crore in compensation.

Constitutionally speaking, Article 15(a) imposes securing medical care among the fundamental responsibilities of the State, while Article 18(1) places public health among the State's primary duties. However, both of these provisions are part of the fundamental principles of state policy, and thus, according to Article 8(2), are judicially unenforceable. Meaning, although the Constitution recognises the importance of public health, it does not, systematically, allow a citizen to demand vaccination as an enforceable constitutional right. The workaround can be found through Article 32's protection of life, which has long been interpreted by our courts as a concept beyond mere physical existence, including protection against foreseeable and preventable threats to survival.

Moreover, the Infectious Diseases (Prevention, Control and Elimination) Act 2018 is the primary legislation that governs issues relating to prevention and control of such diseases in Bangladesh. Section 4 provides a list of infectious diseases, which is non-exhaustive, and the Government may, by gazette, bring any emerging or re-emerging diseases within the Act. The Act further places broad preventive responsibilities on the health authorities in its provisions, including duties to inspect and monitor suspected infections, declare an infected area, and take necessary measures to contain and prevent the transmission. Further, sections 25 and 26 provide for penal sanctions against individuals concealing an infection or disregarding any administrative orders directed under the Act. However, the Act does not prescribe a mandatory minimum vaccine reserve, impose a legal obligation to report a stockout, or establish a minimum coverage threshold. Section 32 empowers the government to make rules, but the Act nowhere specifies how the state should manage an emergency outbreak like the present one.

So when the state outright cancelled a previously deferred supplementary immunisation campaign rather than rescheduling it, or when it moved away from UNICEF's vaccination procurement channel toward a competitive-tender-based system, despite explicit and repeated warnings of the risks, followed by a severe decline in vaccination coverage and ultimately, the outbreak - none of it, strictly speaking, breached a legal duty. This is because the statute only contemplates the citizens failing the state, not the other way around.

The aim is not to make the State responsible for every outbreak that occurs, but to establish a legally responsible framework that will ensure a timely response, so when a similar crisis emerges, the State speaks with action rather than regret.



India shows that the alternative is not necessarily hypothetical. Its Epidemic Diseases Act 1897, together with the Disaster Management Act 2005, gives the State explicit emergency powers over public health, and a number of significant case precedents have been set out in this regard. The 2021 case of *In Re: Distribution of Essential Supplies and Services During Pandemic* (2021), where the Indian Supreme Court took *suo motu* cognisance of the second COVID-19 wave; or the 2026 case, *Rachana Gangu* v *Union of India*, where the court ordered a no-fault compensation framework, holding that grave harm following a state-led public health intervention imposes a *positive obligation* on the state, can be exemplary for Bangladesh.

International law establishes a general preventive standard. Article 12 of ICESCR requires the States to take measures for the prevention, treatment and control of epidemics and other diseases. Similarly, Article 24 of the UNCRC mandates the States to pursue appropriate measures to ensure the highest attainable right to health for children.

In conclusion, the 2018 Act should be amended to require a minimum and publicly disclosed vaccine reserve, a scientific coverage threshold and a no-fault compensation framework. Ultimately, the aim is not to make the State responsible for every outbreak that occurs, but to establish a legally responsible framework that will ensure a timely response, so when a similar crisis emerges, the State speaks with action rather than regret.

Irna Jahan Shejuti *is a student of law, University of Dhaka.*

DHAKA WE[illegible]Y OCTOBER 7, 2026, ASHWIN 22, 1433 BS

SPORT



It was a privilege to be part of your story, little guy. Today was my last training session with Argentina. And although I tried to experience it like any other day, I knew from the first moment that nothing would ever be the same again.

NICOLAS OTAMENDI, who, like **LIONEL MESSI**, will play his last match for Argentina against Benin today, said in a farewell message to Messi.





France's Michael Olise celebrates scoring their third goal during a stunning 4-1 UEFA Nations League comeback win over Belgium at home yesterday. Dodi Lukebakio's first-half strike nearly handed the visitors their first competitive win over Les Bleus in 45 years, but France erupted with four goals in the final 13 minutes. Desire Doue equalised in the 77th minute before Olise set up Rayan Cherki and then bagged a brace himself, including a stoppage-time strike, to preserve manager Zinedine Zidane's unbeaten start (3W, 1D) and edge France closer to the quarters. Elsewhere in Bologna, Italy striker Pio Esposito celebrates sealing a 3-1 victory over Turkiye. After Gianluca Scamacca's 26th-minute opener was cancelled out by Aral Simsir just past the hour mark, late strikes from Riccardo Calafiori and Esposito secured the win. The results leave Italy second in Group A1, three points behind leaders France and one ahead of Belgium. PHOTOS: **REUTERS**

A second chance for 'idle cricketers' through Second XI

SAMSUL AREFIN KHAN

- Second XI players get Tk **15,000** per match, compared to Tk **1.5** lakh for First XI players, with lower allowances and basic accommodation.
- Eight divisional teams will compete in the three-day Second XI, with the top two meeting in the November **11–13** final.
- BCB gave each division Tk **3** lakh for training and has demanded itemised accounts from Rajshahi.

Young wicketkeeper-batter Gazi Mohammad Tahjibul Islam played 10 matches for Dhaka Metro and Mymensingh Division across the last two editions of the National Cricket League. This season, however, the 22-year-old will represent Dhaka Division in the NCL Second XI, which begins across four venues today.

A Bangladesh U-19 World Cup representative in 2022, Tahjibul was left out of Dhaka's First XI, with Mahidul Islam Ankon and Ashiqur Rahman Shibli preferred. The Second XI gives him a chance to regain his place.

"The Second XI tournament is a great initiative. If this Second XI didn't exist, we would have had to sit idle this season. Now there's a chance that if I play extraordinarily well and produce strong innings, I will definitely get called up to the First XI," Tahjibul told The Daily Star on Tuesday.

In April, Bangladesh Cricket Board president Tamim Iqbal announced the NCL Second XI Championship, inspired by England's County Championship.

The NCL is contested by eight divisional teams, and the Second XI competition also features eight divisional teams. The three-day tournament will conclude with a final between the top two sides from November 11 to 13.

Left-handed opener Minhazul Hasan Megh, who has represented Bangladesh at different age levels and played for Shinepukur Cricket Club in the last First Division Cricket League, also welcomed the opportunity.

"I have played First Division cricket for three to four years. Last season, I scored two hundreds and finished sixth among the top run-scorers. With two XI teams this year, more opportunities have opened up," Megh, who will play for Rangpur Second XI, said.

The tournament could also provide a pathway back for players such as Jubair Hossain Likhon, who has struggled to secure opportunities with his domestic teams and last played first-class cricket in 2019. Likhon has been included in Mymensingh's Second XI squad this season and sees the tournament as an opportunity to showcase his ability.

"The thing is, in the First XI, apart from big players or seniors, First Division or Second Division players rarely get a chance to play... Now no player is sitting idle. Everyone stays involved in matches and practice, which is really good," said Likhon, who represented Bangladesh in six Tests, three ODIs and one T20I between 2014 and 2015.

Likhon, who will miss the opening match due to fever, hopes the introduction of the Second XI will help change the perception of leg-spinners in domestic cricket, saying players like him could otherwise spend most of their time on the bench.

For the inaugural season, the BCB has prioritised regular cricket for Second XI players over First XI-level facilities. While First XI players receive Tk 1.5 lakh in match fees, Second XI players will receive Tk 15,000. Their daily allowance is also lower, while the BCB has arranged accommodation for the eight participating teams at Krira Palli and the Bangladesh Krira Shikkha Pratisthan (BKSP).

BCB tournament committee chairman Sirajuddin Md Alamgir acknowledged the limitations but said the primary objective was to create a platform for players to prove themselves.

"We are creating a competitive platform on a limited budget to give players an avenue to perform and progress upward. Our facilities are limited due to realistic constraints. Players are accommodated at BKSP Krira Palli, which offers medium-standard rather than top-tier accommodation," he said.

"We gave Tk 3 lakh in training funds to each of the eight divisions, with clear spending categories. Today, we issued a show-cause notice to the Rajshahi Divisional Sports Association seeking itemised accounts. If they cannot show the money was spent as specified, they must refund it," he said, adding that divisional associations must take ownership of their teams rather than rely entirely on the BCB.

The Second XI may not offer First XI-level rewards, but for players waiting for an opportunity, regular cricket could be the most valuable reward of all.

BCB turns to Kookaburra for balance

ABDULLAH AL MEHDI

Three of the four matches of the first round of the National Cricket League ended in draws, harking back to a time when the competition frequently produced dull games. That was not the case over the last three seasons though when the ball dominated the bat in the majority of matches, barring those played on placid tracks. The biggest change this season has perhaps been the reintroduction of the Kookaburra ball.

Last season, after securing the NCL title, Rangpur skipper Akbar Ali had told this newspaper that a 'result-oriented wicket in the last round' had helped them secure the result they needed to win the title. The Dukes ball came into play from the third round last season, and its overall effect was telling. Pacers were able to get the ball to move almost until the 60th over, while batters faced tough examinations during morning sessions.

BCB chief selector Habibul Bashar feels it is still too early in the tournament to identify a pattern or conclude that the NCL is returning to its old ways, but believes the spinners might have more of a say this season than the pacers due to the introduction of the Kookaburra.

With a strong fast-bowling unit dominating national cricket and batters somewhat struggling, the BCB wanted to create more balance between bat and ball. The conditions, however, seems to have had a rather extreme effect.

"We asked for 6 mm grass and that's what's being used. But it feels like it was too hot and the grass dried up pretty quickly. The ball change, though, is a significant factor since with Dukes we would see more wickets fall, as happened in the last three seasons. It is not wrong to try something different or new because bowlers are getting tested. We are a subcontinent side and have to learn to play in such conditions. I think it's important to have that balance," Bashar added.



Rangpur certainly did not have it easy against Dhaka in Mirpur, with Akbar having to steer them to safety after three wickets fell for no runs on the third day. If even mediocre bowlers were getting the ball to swing and seam to a great extent with the Dukes, the Kookaburra has made things more challenging for bowlers.

"You need a bit of skill with the Kookaburra," said Mukidul Mugdho, last season's leading wicket-taker among pacers with 29 wickets. "Out of my six fifers [first-class], I got three with Dukes, two with Kookaburra and one with SG. Yes, with Kookaburra, despite the help, that little bit of effort and skill is needed. It's a bit challenging since you need the right length and have to create pressure. I think it's going to bring a balance. Hasan [Mahmud], Shoriful [Islam] got fifers in Australia with Kookaburra, so you just add to your skill," he said.

The hot conditions and the switch to Kookaburra are set to present different challenges. Good or bad, the change is preparing domestic players for new skillsets, despite the three draws in the first round.

MSC, Kings win big in Fed Cup

SPORTS REPORTER

Title contenders Mohammedan SC got their Federation Cup campaign off to a winning start when the Black and Whites came from behind to beat Arambagh KS 3-1 in their first match at Gopalganj District Stadium on Tuesday.

Forward Sourav Dewan, midfielder Sohel Rana Jr and striker Souleymane Diabate scored one goal apiece in the second half as Mohammedan SC came from behind to beat Arambagh KS after Ghanaian Suraj Rayies had stunned the holders by giving Arambagh a first-half lead.

Following a 1-0 win over Fakirerpool Young Men's Club in the Bangladesh Football League, Varela had all six of Mohammedan's national players available. However, the experienced coach started only two of them, Saad Uddin and Sohel Rana Jr, before introducing Shahriar Emon as a substitute.

In the day's other matches, Bashundhara Kings blanked Dhaka Wanderers Club 5-0, while City Club secured a 1-1 draw with a late equaliser in second-half stoppage time.

WHAT TO WATCH

T SPORTS
World Championship of Legends
Australia vs Bangladesh
Live from 9:30 pm
England vs West Indies
Live from 9:30 pm



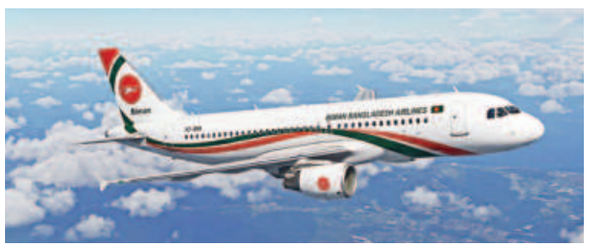
A giant Argentina shirt bearing the iconic number 10 and the word 'Gracias' -- which translates to 'thank you' -- is displayed at the National Flag Memorial in Lionel Messi's hometown of Rosario on the eve of the Albiceleste's international friendly against Benin today. The match is set to be Messi's final appearance in the famous sky blue-and-white jersey after the record eight-time Ballon d'Or winner announced his retirement from international football in August. The 39-year-old is not only Argentina's record appearance-maker but also their leading scorer, with 125 goals in 207 games, as well as a record 68 assists. The man who captained Argentina to their third World Cup in 2022 and fell at the final hurdle in the last edition a few months ago will perform his wizardry for the national team for the final time in front of some 85,000 fans at Buenos Aires's Estadio Monumental, bringing down the curtain on his 21-year international career. PHOTO: **AFP**





Biman-Airbus deal likely today

Biman wants deliveries before 2030: Millat



AI GENERATED IMAGE

STAR REPORT

Bangladesh wants deliveries of the 10 Airbus aircraft it plans to purchase for Biman to begin before 2030, Civil Aviation and Tourism Minister M Rashiduzzaman Millat said yesterday.

The government is working to sign a purchase agreement, the minister said at a meeting with a Lufthansa delegation led by German Ambassador to Bangladesh Rüdiger Lotz.

Millat said there was scope for Lufthansa to invest in establishing a maintenance, repair and overhaul facility in Bangladesh as part of the country's efforts to develop an aviation hub, according to a ministry press release.

Meanwhile, UNB reports that the deal will be inked at a ceremony, titled "Spreading Our Wings Together," at Radisson Blu Dhaka Water Garden at 6:30pm today.

Millat, State Minister for Foreign Affairs Humaiun Kobir, Executive Chairman of Invest Bangladesh Authority Ashik Chowdhury, and President and Managing Director of Airbus (India & South Asia) Jürgen Westermeier are scheduled to

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A large pipe discharges dredged sand into a makeshift reservoir on the banks of the Buriganga in the capital's Shyampur area, while an excavator sits nearby amid massive piles of sand and stone. This active sand and stone trade is operating right next to the river boundary demarcation pillar, which has been installed by the Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Authority to prevent encroachment and pollution. The photo was taken recently. PHOTO: MEHEDI HASAN

Flees from court, gets arrested, then does it again

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A murder case accused, Shariful Islam, has escaped from police custody at a Dhaka court twice in 16 months, with the second time being while appearing in the case filed over his first escape.

His first escape took place on June 19 last year while being escorted to the lockup of the Metropolitan Sessions Judge's Court after Additional Metropolitan Sessions Judge's Court-3 of Dhaka held a hearing in the case filed over the 2018 abduction and murder of 14-year-old Jisan Hossain of Khilgaon.

He allegedly struck a police constable before using a metallic object to loosen and remove his handcuffs, according to police. A case was subsequently filed against him with Kotwali Police Station for resisting lawful apprehension.

He was arrested on October 1 last year in connection with the escape, according to court records.

Yesterday, Shariful escaped from the dock of a packed courtroom after the police constable escorting him stepped outside. When the constable returned, he found that the 30-year-old accused had fled, while his handcuffs were still attached to the dock's railing, police said.

Several hours later, police filed another case against Shariful, a resident of Horipur in Dinajpur's Nawabganj upazila, on the

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RU keeps failing to stop campus violence

Students, teachers point to lack of accountability, political influence

ARAFAT RAHAMAN *and* **SHOHANUR RAHMAN RAFI**

- Latest attack leaves at least 10 injured, including four journalists
- Proctor admits failure to control latest attack, says police fled
- RU removes Shaheed Ziaur Rahman Hall provost after protest
- Four earlier attacks took place in the presence of officials

Rajshahi University authorities have repeatedly failed to protect students and journalists from violence on campus since August 2024, even with proctorial officials or teachers present.

The latest incident occurred on Sunday night, when at least 10 people, including four campus journalists, were injured in an attack by leaders and activists of the university unit of Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal near Shaheed Ziaur Rahman Hall.

The injured journalists were Nur Ahsan Mridul of The Daily Star, Zahidul Islam of Agamir Shomoy, Arifuzzaman Korban of bdnews24.com and Mainul Islam Raju of Samakal.

Proctor Prof Mahbubur Rahman had reached the scene before the journalists were attacked. "We failed. We could not control the situation. We called the police, but the police fled in fear," he said.

Around 1:00am yesterday, following an hour-long protest by students and journalists, the university removed Prof Md Mahbubar Rahman as provost of Shaheed Ziaur Rahman Hall.

It also ordered its five-member probe committee to submit its report within three days. The matter is expected to go before the Syndicate on Thursday.

Video footage reviewed by The Daily Star identified Ahsan Habib, Shariful Islam, Takbir Ahmed Emon, Hasibul Islam Hasib, Shahriar Alam Othi, Syed Sajharul Islam and Bishal Chakraborty among those involved in the attack, although none was named in the case filed by the university.

Meanwhile, central Chhatra Dal on Monday night expelled three RU unit members and issued show-cause notices to six others.

Meanwhile, journalists at Chittagong University, Khulna University, Jashore University of Science and Technology, University of Barishal, Jamalpur Science and Technology University and Begum Rokeya University formed separate human chains yesterday to protest the attack on RU journalists and demand punishment for those responsible.

A Daily Star review found four other incidents since August 2024 in which students or journalists were attacked despite university officials being present or attempting to intervene.

Students and teachers interviewed by this newspaper blamed the recurring violence on a lack of accountability, the failure to punish those responsible for earlier incidents and political influence over the university administration.

Contacted, Prof Mahbubur said the "wave" of the 2024 uprising was still influencing young people. He said police were available when needed but were less proactive.

"They arrive at the scene and simply stand there. These challenges are mainly why the problems keep recurring."

EARLIER ATTACKS AT RU

On July 27, Rucsu General Secretary Salahuddin Ammar and Assistant General Secretary SM Salman Sabbir allegedly assaulted student Md Anas in the proctor's office after accusing him of being a Chhatra League activist.

Prof Mahbubur intervened and later escorted Anas, Md Mahmudul Hasan Mahin and another student to the Central Library. Rucsu leaders and Chhatra Shibir activists

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IN FOCUS

DCs ordered to enforce fixed LPG prices

Says Adviser Zahed

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government has instructed all the deputy commissioners (DCs) to take necessary measures to ensure a steady supply of liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) in the open market and enforce the prices fixed for LPG and autogas by the Bangladesh Energy Regulatory Commission.

Prime Minister's Information and Broadcasting Adviser Zahed Ur Rahman disclosed the matter at a weekly press briefing at the Secretariat yesterday.

Acknowledging that LPG is not being sold at the fixed price in some places, he said regular monitoring is being conducted in different districts through mobile courts operated by the Directorate of National Consumers' Right Protection and the local administration.

Noting that the energy minister had held several meetings with business leaders involved in the LPG sector, the adviser said they have assured the minister of all-out cooperation to keep the market stable.

"The government hopes the current crisis in the LPG market will ease through these initiatives."

In response to a question, Zahed said political reconciliation would be a good thing, but it would be difficult without acknowledgement of wrongdoing and repentance by Awami League, whose activities are banned.



A pedestrian poses for a photo next to a newly painted mural of iconic mystic, philosopher, and folk songwriting legend Fakir Lalon Shah near Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy in the capital's Segunbagicha. The Dhaka South City Corporation waste management department has initiated a beautification project in the area after clearing hawkers and illegal roadside shops to create a clean, unobstructed pavement. PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED

ASI withdrawn after 'remarks on taking bribes'

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Moulvibazar*

An assistant sub-inspector of Chunarughat Police Station in Habiganj, who is seen in a video purportedly saying he bought his police uniform with bribe money to take bribes, has been withdrawn and attached to the Habiganj Police Lines.

Habiganj Superintendent of Police Md Tarek Mahmud yesterday said the assistant superintendent of police (ASP) of the circle had been tasked with investigating the incident.

He said ASI Mohammad Ilias Hossain reportedly made the remarks while probing a case filed by Noman Miah at Ranigaon Bazar of the upazila.

A local recorded the incident on a mobile phone, and the video clip was later

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বিনম্র শ্রদ্ধা



এনসিসি ব্যাংকের সাবেক চেয়ারম্যান
মরহুম সৈয়দ মুহাম্মদ আবু মহসিন-এর
২য় মৃত্যুবার্ষিকীতে তাঁর অবদান গভীর শ্রদ্ধায়
স্মরণ করছি এবং বিদেহী আত্মার মাগফেরাত
কামনা করছি।

পরিচালনা পর্ষদ এবং ব্যবস্থাপনা কর্তৃপক্ষ

এনসিসি ব্যাংক
আপনার সাথেই সবসময়