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Bangladesh Freedom Fighters' Welfare Trust

Commerce & Development Department
Swadhinata Bhaban
88, Motijheel Commercial Area, Dhaka-1000

Re-Tender Notice for Renting Office Space to Banks/Insurance Companies/Corporate Offices

Sealed tenders are hereby invited from interested Banks/Insurance Companies/Corporate Offices for renting the premises for a period of 03 (three) years at the highest competitive rate. 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	Renting Approximately 3,740 square feet of space located on the ground floor (south face) of five-storey headquarters building of Bangladesh Freedom Fighters' Welfare Trust Swadhinata Bhaban, 88 Motijheel Commercial Area, Dhaka, for a period of three (3) years.
4.	Tender Memo No and Date:	48.01.0000.201.02.011.26.230; Date:08/10/2026
5.	Tender Security	BDT 1,00,000/- (One Lakh 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 11/10/2026 to 03/11/2026 (during official working hours).
9.	Place for Submission of Tender	(A) Commerce & Development Department (2nd Floor), Bangladesh Freedom Fighters' Welfare 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 04/11/2026 till 2:00 PM.
11.	Date and Time for Opening of Tender	04/11/2026 at 3:00 PM.
12.	Name, Designation & Phone 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-2460

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh

Office of the Upazila Health & Family Planning Officer
Rajasthali, Rangamati Hill District.
E-mail:rajasthali@uhfpo.dghs.gov.bd

Memo no: UHC/Rajasthali/Rangamati/MSR-Ten/2026-27/482 Date: 08/10/2026.

"e-Tender Notice"

e-Tender is invited in the National e-GP system portal (https://www.eprocure.gov.bd). For the Procurement & Supply of following Goods:

Tender ID	Name of Goods	Tender Method	Publication Date & Time	Last Selling Date & Time	Closing & Opening Date & Time
1316903	Procurement of MSR Non-EDCL Medicine (Goods) for UHC Rajasthali, Rangamati (FY-2026-27).	OTM	11-Oct-2026 10.00 AM	25-Oct-2026 2:30 PM	25-Oct-2026 3:00 PM
1316898	Procurement of MSR Surgical Equipments (Goods) for UHC Rajasthali, Rangamati (FY-2026-27).	OTM	11-Oct-2026 10.00 AM	25-Oct-2026 2:30 PM	25-Oct-2026 3:00 PM
1316836	Procurement of MSR Linen Item(Goods) for UHC, Rajasthali, Rangamati (FY-2026-27).	OTM	11-Oct-2026 10.00 AM	25-Oct-2026 2:30 PM	25-Oct-2026 3:00 PM
1316723	Procurement of MSR Gouze,Bandage & Cotton (Goods) for UHC Rajasthali, Rangamati (FY-2026-27).	OTM	11-Oct-2026 10.00 AM	25-Oct-2026 2:30 PM	25-Oct-2026 3:00 PM
1316722	Procurement of MSR Chemical & Re-agent (Goods) for UHC Rajasthali, Rangamati (FY-2026-27).	OTM	11-Oct-2026 10.00 AM	25-Oct-2026 2:30 PM	25-Oct-2026 3:00 PM
1316721	Procurement of MSR Furniture & kitchen Items (Goods) for UHC Rajasthali, Rangamati (FY-2026-27).	OTM	11-Oct-2026 10.00 AM	25-Oct-2026 2:30 PM	25-Oct-2026 3:00 PM
1316717	Procurement of Patient Diet Item (Goods) for UHC Rajasthali, Rangamati (FY-2026-27).	OTM	11-Oct-2026 10.00 AM	25-Oct-2026 2:30 PM	25-Oct-2026 3:00 PM
1316716	Procurement of Cloth Washing (Goods) for UHC Rajasthali, Rangamati (FY-2026-27).	OTM	11-Oct-2026 10.00 AM	25-Oct-2026 2:30 PM	25-Oct-2026 3:00 PM
1316715	Procurement of Office Stationery and other Item (Goods) for UHC Rajasthali, Rangamati (FY-2026-27).	OTM	11-Oct-2026 10.00 AM	25-Oct-2026 2:30 PM	25-Oct-2026 3:00 PM

This is an online Tender where only e-Tender will be acceptable in the National e-GP system portal No offline /hard copies will be accepted.
To submit e-Tender, registration in the National e-GP System portal (https://www.eprocure.gov.bd) is required .
Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP system portal and form e-GP help desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd)
The procuring entity reserves the right to accept or reject any or all tender(s) without assingning any reason what so ever.

06/10/26
(Dr. Md. Neoshad Khan)
UH&FPO
Upazila Health Complex,
Rajasthali, Rangamati Hill District.

GD-2463

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh

Office of The Bishwanath Upazila Health Complex, Sylhet.
e-mail:biswanath@uhfpo.dghs.gov.bd

Memo No: UHC/Bishwanath/e-Tender/MSR/2026-2027-720 Date: 10/10/2026

e-Tender Notice

This is an online tender Financial Year-2026-2027, where only e-Tenders will be accepted e-GP portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted. To submit e-tender, please register on e-GP system portal (https://www.eprocure.gov.bd), for more details, please contact support desk contact numbers.
e-Tender are invited in e-GP system portal (https://www.eprocure.gov.bd) by Dr. Mohammad Anisul Hossain, UH&FPO. Bishwanath Upazila Health Complex, Sylhet, for the procurement of details below:

SL No	Tender ID	Name of Goods	Scheduled Tender/Proposal Publication Date & Time	Tender/Proposal Closing Date & Time
01	1350911	Procurement of Non-EDCL Medicine for the F.Y 2026-2027 at Bishwanath Upazila Health Complex, Sylhet.	11-Oct-2026 14:00 PM	26-Oct-2026 14:00 PM
02	1350912	Procurement of Surgical Instrument for the F.Y 2026-2027 Bishwanath Upazila Health Complex, Sylhet.	11-Oct-2026 14:00 PM	26-Oct-2026 14:00 PM
03	1350913	Procurement of Gauze Bandage & Cotton for the F.Y 2026-2027 at Bishwanath Upazila Health Complex, Sylhet.	11-Oct-2026 14:00 PM	26-Oct-2026 14:00 PM
04	1350914	Procurement of Linen Items for the F.Y 2026-2027 at Bishwanath Upazila Health Complex, Sylhet.	11-Oct-2026 14:00 PM	26-Oct-2026 14:00 PM
05	1350915	Procurement of Chemical Re-agent for the F.Y 2026-2027 at Bishwanath Upazila Health Complex, Sylhet.	11-Oct-2026 14:00 PM	26-Oct-2026 14:00 PM
06	1350916	Procurement of Furniture for the F.Y 2026-2027 at Bishwanath Upazila Health Complex, Sylhet.	11-Oct-2026 14:00 PM	26-Oct-2026 14:00 PM

e-Tender details can be downloaded on e-GP system portal (https://www.eprocure.gov.bd) for pursuer. e-Tender will be accepted only as stated in above list; accepted tenders will be opened online as stated in above list.

Dr. Mohammad Anisul Hossain
UH&FPO
Bishwanath Upazila Health Complex, Sylhet.

GD-2464

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Unique Heights (Level-13, 14 & 15), 117, Kazi Nazrul Islam Avenue, Eskaton Garden, Dhaka-1217.
Tel:- 55138633-36 (PABX), E-mail: info@egcb.com.bd, Web: egcb.gov.bd

No. 27.27.2666.000.402.08.0006.26.2392 Date: 10.10.2026

e-Tender Notice

e-Tender is invited in the national e-GP System Portal (http://www.eprocure.gov.bd) for the following procurement for Haripur 412 MW Combined Cycle Power Plant, Haripur, Bandar, Narayanganj:

SL No	e-Tender ID	Invitation Reference No.	Tender Description	Publication Date & Time	Closing Date & Time
1.	1343734	27.27.2666.000.402.08.0006.26.2350; Date:04/10/2026	Procurement of Sulfuric acid under framework contract for a period of 01 (One) year for Haripur 412 MW CCPP.	08-October-2026 18:00 Hrs BST	29-October-2026 12:00 Hrs BST

10.10.2026
Sonjoy Debnath
Executive Engineer (Mechanical & Civil Maintenance Department)
Haripur 412 MW Combined Cycle Power Plant, EGB PLC., Haripur, Bandar, Narayanganj.

বাংলাদেশ পর্যটন করপোরেশন

বাণিজ্যিক বিভাগ, পর্যটন ভবন,
প্লটঃ ই-৫, সি/১, পশ্চিম আগারগাঁও, শেরে বাংলা
নগর প্রশাসনিক এলাকা, ঢাকা-১২০৭।

স্মারক নং-৩০.০৩২.০৩১.৫২.৪২.১৮৯.২০১৪ তারিখঃ ১১-১০-২০২৬ খ্রিস্টাব্দ

লিজ বিজ্ঞপ্তি

বাংলাদেশ পর্যটন করপোরেশন (বাপক)-এর মালিকানাধীন (১) মেঘাই পর্যটন কেন্দ্র, কাজীপুর, সিরাজগঞ্জ (২) সাগরদাঁড়ী পর্যটন কেন্দ্র, যশোর ও (৩) বারদী পর্যটন কেন্দ্র, নারায়ণগঞ্জ ১০(দশ) বছরের জন্য বেসরকারি ব্যবস্থাপনায় পরিচালনার জন্য লিজ গ্রহণে আগ্রহী হোটেল ও রেস্তোরাঁ পরিচালনায় অভিজ্ঞ ব্যক্তি/প্রতিষ্ঠানের নিকট থেকে নিম্নবর্ণিত শর্তে দরপত্র আহ্বান করা যাচ্ছে :

(১)	দরপত্র অংশগ্রহণকারী ব্যক্তি/প্রতিষ্ঠানকে কমপক্ষে ১০ (দশ) বছরের রেস্তোরাঁসহ আবাসিক হোটেল পরিচালনার অভিজ্ঞতা থাকতে হবে। জাতীয় পরিচয়পত্র, ট্রেড লাইসেন্স (আবশ্যক), ভ্যাট রেজিস্ট্রেশন সনদ/টিন সনদ, অভিজ্ঞতার সনদ ইত্যাদি থাকতে হবে।
(২)	প্রতিটি পর্যটন কেন্দ্রের জন্য পৃথক দরপত্র সিডিউল অর্থ ও হিসাব শাখা, বাপক, প্রধান কার্যালয়, পর্যটন ভবন, প্লটঃ ই-৫, সি/১, পশ্চিম আগারগাঁও, শেরেবাংলা নগর প্রশাসনিক এলাকা, ঢাকা-১২০৭ থেকে নগদ ৫,০০০.০০ (পাঁচ হাজার) টাকা (অফেরতযোগ্য) পরিশোধ করে আগামী ০৪-১১-২০২৬ তারিখ পর্যন্ত অফিস চলাকালীন ক্রয় ও জমা প্রদান করা যাবে। দরপ্রস্তাবে অংশগ্রহণকারীগণের পালনীয় অন্যান্য শর্তাবলী দরপত্র সিডিউলে বর্ণিত থাকবে। দরপত্র দাতাগণ এক বা একাধিক কেন্দ্রের জন্য পৃথক পৃথক দরপত্র সিডিউল ক্রয় ও জমা প্রদান করতে পারবেন।
(৩)	দরপত্রের সাথে আর্নেস্ট মানি হিসেবে প্রতিটি কেন্দ্রের জন্য উদ্ধৃত দরের ২৫% টাকা (সমন্বয়যোগ্য) ডিডি/পে-অর্ডার আকারে বাংলাদেশের যেকোন তফশিলী ব্যাংক থেকে সংগ্রহ করে 'বাংলাদেশ পর্যটন করপোরেশন'-এর অনুকূলে জমা প্রদান করতে হবে।
(৪)	দরদাতাগণকে দরপ্রস্তাবসমূহ সীল করা খামে মুখবন্ধ অবস্থায় সরাসরি মহাব্যবস্থাপক (বাণিজ্যিক), বাংলাদেশ পর্যটন করপোরেশন, প্রধান কার্যালয়, পর্যটন ভবন, প্লটঃ ই-৫, সি/১, পশ্চিম আগারগাঁও (৫ম তলা), শেরেবাংলা নগর প্রশাসনিক এলাকা, ঢাকা-১২০৭ এর দপ্তরে রক্ষিত টেন্ডার বক্সে আগামী ০৫-১১-২০২৬ তারিখ দুপুর ০১:০০ ঘটিকার মধ্যে অবশ্যই জমা প্রদান করতে হবে। ০১:০০ টার পর কোন দরপ্রস্তাব গ্রহণ করা হবে না। প্রাপ্ত দরপ্রস্তাবসমূহ ঐ দিনই দুপুর ০২:০০ ঘটিকায় দরদাতাগণের অথবা তাদের মনোনীত প্রতিনিধির উপস্থিতিতে (যদি কেহ উপস্থিত থাকেন) উন্মুক্ত করা হবে।
(৫)	সফল দরদাতাকে চুক্তি স্বাক্ষরের পূর্বে উদ্ধৃত ১০ম (দশম) বছরের প্রিমিয়াম, ভ্যাট ও আয়কর জামানত হিসেবে বাংলাদেশ পর্যটন করপোরেশনের অনুকূলে অগ্রীম জমা প্রদান করতে হবে।
(৬)	লিজ/ভাড়ার উপর সরকারি নিয়মানুযায়ী প্রতি বছর ১৫% ভ্যাট এবং ১০% আয়কর বা প্রযোজ্য হারে পরিশোধ করতে হবে।
(৭)	স্থাপনাটি যে অবস্থায় রয়েছে, সেই অবস্থায় হস্তান্তর করা হবে। বাপক কর্তৃপক্ষের অনুমতিক্রমে সংস্কার ও মেরামত কাজ করা যাবে। সংস্কার ও মেরামত কাজের জন্য পরবর্তীতে চুক্তির মেয়াদ বৃদ্ধি বা ভাড়া মওকুফের মত সুবিধা দাবী করা যাবে না।
(৮)	আগ্রহী ব্যক্তি/প্রতিষ্ঠান দরপ্রস্তাবে অংশগ্রহণের পূর্বে সরেজমিনে স্থাপনাসমূহ পরিদর্শন করে নিতে পারবে।
(৯)	দরপ্রস্তাব মুখবন্ধ খামে দাখিল করতে হবে এবং মুখবন্ধ খামের উপর দরদাতার নাম ও পূর্ণ ঠিকানা এবং পর্যটন কেন্দ্রের নাম স্পষ্টাক্ষরে লিখতে হবে।
(১০)	অসম্পূর্ণ বা ত্রুটিপূর্ণ দরপত্র সরাসরি বাতিল বলে গণ্য হবে।
(১১)	বাংলাদেশ পর্যটন করপোরেশন কর্তৃপক্ষ কোন কারণ দর্শানো ব্যতিরেকে যেকোন দরপ্রস্তাব গ্রহণ বা বাতিল কিংবা সকল দরপ্রস্তাব বাতিল করার ক্ষমতা সংরক্ষণ করেন।

(মোঃ জিয়াউল হক হাওলাদার)
মহাব্যবস্থাপক (বাণিজ্যিক)
ফোনঃ ০২-৪১০২৪২১০

জিডি-২৪৬৫

গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার

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নথি নং: কঅ৩ঢা/কককা/নিয়োগ/নিঃওপদোঃ/২০২৬-২০২৭/৩৪০ তারিখঃ ২৬ আশ্বিন ১৪৩৩ বঙ্গাব্দ / ১১ অক্টোবর ২০২৬ খ্রিস্টাব্দ

"নিয়োগ বিজ্ঞপ্তি"

অর্থ মন্ত্রণালয়, অভ্যন্তরীণ সম্পদ বিভাগ, কর-১ শাখা এর স্মারক নম্বর-০৮.০০.০০০০.০০০.০৩৭.১১.০০০১.২৪.৩৩২,তারিখ: ১৩ সেপ্টেম্বর ২০২৬খ্রিঃ অনুযায়ী প্রাপ্ত ছাড়পত্রের ভিত্তিতে কর অঞ্চল-৩, ঢাকা এর অধীনে গ্রেড-১৩ হতে গ্রেড-২০ পর্যন্ত বিভিন্ন শূন্য পদে সরাসরি কোটায় অস্থায়ী জনবল নিয়োগের লক্ষ্যে **ঢাকা জেলার** প্রকৃত স্থায়ী বাসিন্দাদের নিকট হতে যোগ্যতা সম্পন্ন প্রার্থীদের শর্ত সাপেক্ষে অনলাইনে (https://tax3.teletalk.com.bd) ওয়েবসাইটের মাধ্যমে দরখাস্ত আহবান করা যাচ্ছে। উল্লেখ্য, অনলাইন ব্যতীত অন্য কোন উপায়ে আবেদন গ্রহণ করা হবে না।

ক্রমিক নং	পদের নাম ও গ্রেড	পদ সংখ্যা
(১)	কম্পিউটার অপারেটর গ্রেড-১৩	১ (এক) টি
(২)	প্রধান সহকারী গ্রেড-১৩	৫ (পাঁচ) টি
(৩)	উচ্চমান সহকারী গ্রেড-১৪	৮ (আট) টি
(৪)	সীটমুদ্রাক্ষরিক কাম-কম্পিউটার অপারেটর গ্রেড-১৪	১৩ (তেরো) টি
(৫)	গাড়ি চালক গ্রেড-১৬	১ (এক) টি
(৬)	অফিস সহকারী কাম-কম্পিউটার মুদ্রাক্ষরিক গ্রেড-১৬	৯ (নয়) টি
(৭)	অফিস সহায়ক গ্রেড-২০	১০ (দশ) টি

২. পূর্ণাঙ্গ বিজ্ঞপ্তিটি কর অঞ্চল-৩, ঢাকা এর ওয়েবসাইট https://taxeszone3dhaka.gov.bd এবং https://tax3.teletalk.com.bd অথবা QR Code স্ক্যান এর মাধ্যমে বাংলাদেশের একমাত্র রাষ্ট্রীয় মোবাইল অপারেটর টেলিটকের জব পোর্টাল https://alljobs.teletalk.com.bd ওয়েবসাইটে সরাসরি প্রবেশ করেও পাওয়া যাবে। নিয়োগ পরীক্ষার তারিখ, সময় ও অন্যান্য তথ্য https://taxeszone3dhaka.gov.bd ওয়েবসাইট হতে জানা যাবে।

৩. উল্লেখ্য, আবেদনপত্র পূরণ ও পরীক্ষার ফি জমাদান শুরুর তারিখ ও সময়: ১২ অক্টোবর ২০২৬ খ্রিস্টাব্দ, সময়: সকাল ১০.০০ ঘটিকা এবং আবেদনপত্র জমাদানের শেষ তারিখ ও সময়: ০১ নভেম্বর ২০২৬ খ্রিস্টাব্দ, সময়: বিকাল ০৫.০০ ঘটিকা পর্যন্ত।

*** Online এর আবেদন ও নিয়োগ পরীক্ষা সংক্রান্ত যে কোন বিষয়ে নিয়োগকারী কর্তৃপক্ষের সিদ্ধান্তই চূড়ান্ত বলে গণ্য হবে।

*** শেষ তারিখ ও সময়ের জন্য অপেক্ষা না করে হাতে যথেষ্ট সময় নিয়ে অনলাইন-এ আবেদনপত্র পূরণ ও আবেদন ফি জমাদান সম্পন্ন করতে পরামর্শ দেওয়া যাচ্ছে।

কর অঞ্চল-৩, ঢাকা এর ওয়েবসাইটে প্রবেশ এর QR code

কর অঞ্চল-৩, ঢাকা এর টেলিটক পোর্টালে প্রবেশ এর QR code

(মোঃ ওয়াসিউল ইসলাম)
উপ কর কমিশনার
সদর দপ্তর (প্রশাসন)
কর অঞ্চল-৩, ঢাকা
ও
সদস্য সচিব
বিভাগীয় নিয়োগ কমিটি
কর অঞ্চল-৩, ঢাকা।

GD-2462

DHAKA SUNDAY OCTOBER 11, 2026



It is certainly not how partners should treat each other.

VOLODYMYR ZELENSKY, Ukrainian president, on US-Russia deal on diesel

YOUR RIGHT TO KNOW

The Daily Star

SECOND EDITION

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INDIAN VOTER LIST ROW

Thousands held in protest crackdown

Youth-led movement vows to continue demo till CEC resigns

AGENCIES

Indian authorities yesterday locked down parts of the capital and detained thousands of people, including political leaders, lawyers and students, in an attempt to stop an anti-government protest.

Thousands of police and paramilitary personnel were deployed across the city, mobile internet services were suspended in the central business district, and dozens of metro stations and markets were shut as authorities moved to stop the demonstration called by the "Cockroach Janata Party" (CJP) to protest against an exercise that has stripped 130 million names from India's electoral roll.

The CJP, as well as opposition parties, civil society and student groups, have alleged that the process of "purifying" India's voter roll was done to entrench the power of Narendra Modi's BJP government, and have called for India's chief election commissioner, Gyanesh Kumar, who oversaw the exercise, to resign.

The movement had planned to gather thousands of people at Jantar Mantar in central Delhi, but the area was sealed off by security forces before the demonstration began.

Four ex-CMs, including Mamata, Kejriwal, briefly detained | Police say all 3,000 detainees released, except protest leaders | UN slams 'arbitrary detentions'; India protests



Delhi police detain Mamata Banerjee.

A home ministry official, speaking on condition of anonymity, told Reuters that more than 2,000 people were detained in Delhi. Local media said about 400 protesters were held in India's financial hub, Mumbai.

However, police later said they released almost "all 3,000 people" they detained across Delhi. CJP's top leadership and YouTuber Dhruv Rathee remained in custody.

However, CJP claimed the detainee number was much higher.

"More than 15,000 protesters have been detained," Ajinkya Shinde, a CJP leader, said at a news conference in Delhi.

Delhi police denied permission for the protest, and in the days leading up to yesterday, officials began to barricade roads throughout Delhi. More than 25,000 police and security personnel were deployed across the city, many pulled from other states.

Abhijeet Dipke, the founder and leader of the CJP, accused the government of being scared of the young people who were rising up in protest. "The mass crackdown on protesters and the shutdown of Delhi are not signs of strength but of a leader terrified of his own people," said Dipke.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 3



Security personnel detain Cockroach Janta Party activists seeking the resignation of India's Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar in New Delhi yesterday.

PHOTO: **REUTERS**

FIXING PLUNDERED BANKS

Tk 60,000cr of taxpayers' money needed annually for up to 8yrs: BB

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh Bank has proposed a Tk 60,000 crore-fund every year from the national budget for the next five to eight years to make up for money plundered from banks, said its Governor Md Mostaqur Rahman yesterday.

If approved for the full eight years, the government will have to provide Tk 4.8 lakh crore to the banking sector; over five years, the sum would be Tk 3 lakh crore, he said at the launch of Bangla QR with ONE Bank at United International University.

Defaulted loans in the sector currently stand at Tk 6.06 lakh crore.

"The money that was siphoned out of the banks belongs to the public -- we have to return it. For the next five to eight years, we will need this amount from the budget. This is your money and my money. Yet it was looted by another group, and we are the ones paying the penalty."

Citing the government's Family Card programme, he said Bangladesh has roughly four crore families, of whom about

SEE PAGE 2 COL 6

Buy planes first, figure out business case later?

Questions remain over Biman's plan for new aircraft, financing

TASNEEM TAYEB

Biman has 35 aircraft on order against its current 19-strong fleet. The scale of the expansion is significant. But the more fundamental question is whether it rests on an adequately deliberated business case.

Biman has spoken of expanding into North America, Europe, Australia, and several regions of Asia, while the government wants the airline's share of Bangladesh's passenger market to rise from around 20 percent to at least 50 percent.

NEWS ANALYSIS

What has not been made public is a route-by-route plan showing how the aircraft will be deployed, how quickly new markets are expected to mature, and how Biman can move beyond its heavy dependence on Middle Eastern traffic.

In July 2025, while Dhaka was negotiating tariffs and trade imbalance with Washington, the then interim government publicly said the planned Boeing purchase had risen from 14 aircraft to 25.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

Flights cancelled as blast rocks Riyadh airport

Biman suspends 2 Riyadh flights

REUTERS, *Riyadh*

Several people were wounded in an attack on King Khalid International Airport in Saudi Arabia's capital yesterday that forced a suspension of operations, the country's civil aviation authority said.

There was no immediate claim of responsibility for the attack, but it comes amid an escalation of missile strikes by Yemen's Iran-aligned Houthis against Saudi Arabia.

The airport had already been struck in two earlier attacks this week that left four people dead and exposed vulnerabilities in the kingdom's ability to defend itself as it wages war on the Houthis. Saudi Arabia's early warning system did not issue an alert ahead of yesterday's incident.

The Saudi government's media office did not immediately respond to questions from Reuters.

One eyewitness at the airport reported seeing an explosion and then multiple people lying injured on the ground inside. More than a dozen ambulances were seen rushing towards the facility.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1



PHOTO: **PRABIR DAS**

Traffic came to a standstill at Shahbagh in the capital as hundreds of jobseekers block the road yesterday, protesting the postponement of the recruitment examination for assistant upazila youth development officers following allegations of a question paper leak. Story on page 5.

INT'L DAY OF GIRL CHILD

Why do cases of child sexual abuse fail to secure justice despite stringent laws? Fowzul Azim, legal analyst, researcher and former judge of the Women and Children Repression Prevention Tribunal, speaks to Star's Nilima Jahan about systemic failures in investigation, prosecution and case management, and the reforms needed to address them.

'A child should never suffer twice in pursuit of justice'

TDS: Stringent laws exist, yet the overwhelming majority of child sexual abuse cases end in acquittal. Where does the fundamental failure lie?

Fowzul Azim: The crisis stems not from a lack of stringent laws, but from a breakdown in coordination across three vital stages: investigation, prosecution and adjudication.



A court cannot convict based on moral certainty or social probability. Guilt must be established beyond reasonable doubt through lawful, admissible evidence.

A recent Supreme Court–BRAC study identified the primary obstacles: absent witnesses, repeated adjournments, investigative delays, weak evidentiary chains and lack of witness protection.

A crucial distinction must be understood: a crime not occurring is not the same as a crime not being proven beyond reasonable doubt in court.

In sexual violence cases, discrepancies between the First Information Report and trial testimony, absent witnesses, improperly collected medical evidence, delayed forensic or DNA reports, and hostile witnesses can prevent conviction despite strong suspicion.

Increasing conviction rates is not about imposing harsher penalties, but ensuring cases are supported by sufficient, admissible evidence before reaching court.

TDS: The Supreme Court–BRAC study reveals that trials take an average of 1,370 days (nearly 3.7 years) across 22

SEE PAGE 2 COL 3

BGB returns fire after BSF shoots, injures Bangladeshi

The man was reportedly shot inside Indian territory

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Kushtia*

Border Guard Bangladesh personnel returned fire after members of India's Border Security Force allegedly shot and injured a Bangladeshi national inside Indian territory opposite the Jamalpur border in Kushtia's Daulatpur upazila yesterday morning.

Lt Col Rashed Kamal Roni, commanding officer of the BGB-47 Kushtia Battalion, said the shooting took place around 9:30am, approximately 300 yards inside Indian territory, opposite the battalion's Jamalpur Border Outpost.

The injured person is believed to be a Bangladeshi national, he said, citing preliminary information.

According to a BGB press release, a patrol team responded promptly and returned fire in self-defence to ensure the safety of people on the Bangladesh side of the border. Border patrols and surveillance have also been intensified.



Dancers portray the mythical battle between Goddess Durga and the demon Mahishasura at Dhakeshwari National Temple in the capital yesterday, marking Mahalaya, which heralds the arrival of Durga Puja -- one of the biggest religious festivals of the Hindu community. The performance depicts the goddess's triumph over evil. PHOTO: MEHEDI HASAN

Considering Makkah pact for sake of Mideast peace

Says state minister for foreign affairs

UNB, *Dhaka*

Bangladesh is positively considering the Makkah Defence Agreement in view of peace and stability in the Middle East and the Muslim world, said Humaiun Kobir, the state minister for foreign affairs.

Besides, Bangladesh could deploy its peacekeeping expertise more effectively and extensively across the world, he told reporters yesterday after attending a seminar yesterday titled "From workforce to strategic partnership: reimagining Bangladesh-KSA relations".

The seminar was organised by the Bangladesh Institute of International and Strategic Studies and the Centre for Migration Studies of North South University.

The next chapter of Bangladesh-Saudi Arabia relations should therefore be defined by value creation rather than volume alone, he said.

Prime Minister Tarique Rahman has accepted an invitation from Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman to visit the kingdom.

Salman has also expressed interest in visiting Bangladesh, according to Humaiun.

The proposed visits reflected growing political ties between the two countries, he said, while describing Bangladesh as a strong partner of Saudi Arabia in maritime security.

Calling for a comprehensive economic and strategic

SEE PAGE 8 COL 3

Buy planes first

FROM PAGE 1

Biman said the same day that it was unaware of any such decision, while senior officials told The Daily Star that the techno-financial committee was also unaware.

As the new government proceeded with the plan after the election, Biman's first 14 Boeing aircraft were contracted in April this year, while 11 more were added through a supplemental agreement in September. The Airbus agreement for 10 planes followed on October 7.

These orders came through separate decisions, and it is unclear whether they were ever under one fleet plan covering delivery, deployment, staffing, maintenance, and financing.

The government had itself asked for such planning.

On April 22, eight days before the first Boeing order, Biman was directed to prepare an integrated action plan based on route-wise revenue and expenditure. The same meeting discussed expanding the fleet to around 47 aircraft by FY2034-35.

Whether that action plan was updated for the additional 11 Boeing planes and the Airbus package has not been made public.

No public year-by-year schedule shows when new aircraft will arrive, when existing ones will retire, how long interim leases will last, or how much of the new capacity will replace older aircraft rather than expand the network.

The first Boeing deliveries are scheduled from 2031, while the Airbus agreement disclosed no schedule. Civil Aviation and Tourism Minister M Rashiduzzaman Millat has said Bangladesh wants Airbus deliveries to begin before 2030 and asked the planemaker to deliver at least one aircraft by 2026-27.

Biman could thus move from leased capacity to a concentrated cycle of owned-aircraft deliveries in the 2030s.

EXPOSURE

The $3.7 billion figure associated with the first 14 Boeings is a list-price estimate by Reuters, and the government puts the additional 11 at around $2.7 billion. Boeing has not disclosed the contract value of either order.

New aircraft will bring in more revenue, but the payments are large compared to what Biman earns today.

Before the April agreement, the government estimated annual payments for the first 14 aircraft at Tk 1,500 crore to Tk 2,000 crore.

Biman reported revenue of Tk 11,559 crore, operating profit of Tk 1,602 crore and net profit of Tk 785.21 crore in FY2024-25.

Biman has said the first Boeing purchase would be supported by US Export-Import Bank financing and a sovereign guarantee.

The amount financed and repayment schedule have not been detailed, while financing for the additional 11 aircraft has not been disclosed.

The aviation minister has said Biman would meet costs from its own earnings and suitable financing, with payments made gradually as aircraft are delivered.

The Airbus order has been linked to European export-credit financing covering around 85 percent of the cost, but the final amount and terms were not disclosed.

Biman earns foreign currency from international operations, but long-term dollar or euro liabilities could become more expensive if the taka weakens.

Without the currencies, repayment schedules, and financing costs, the scale of that exposure cannot be judged.

OPERATIONAL CHALLENGES

Introducing Airbus aircraft into a mostly Boeing fleet requires separate pilot and engineer trainings, tooling, spares, and maintenance arrangements.

Airbus has reportedly offered training and maintenance support, but the costs have not been disclosed.

The commercial case for the new aircraft will also depend on the assumptions behind Biman's fleet planning.

In 2024, an initial assessment of two A350-900s by a Biman committee found a negative net present value over 25 years. Net present value shows whether an investment will be profitable or not over a period of time and is calculated considering all future cash inflows and outflows.

A reconstituted committee later found the proposal viable using more optimistic load-factor and fuel assumptions.

Those assumptions are now under pressure.

Jet fuel prices in Bangladesh have risen for three consecutive months, and global carriers warn that elevated costs could persist for another 12 to 18 months.

Any long-term fleet plan needs to show how Biman's route economics would hold up under higher fuel prices in the future than those assumed when earlier assessments were prepared.

NETWORK, GEOPOLITICAL RISKS

The April roadmap mentioned potential destinations including Yangon, Malé, New York, Kunming, Bahrain, Sydney, Wuhan, Jakarta, and Seoul.

What is missing is a clear mapping of which aircraft will serve which routes, at what frequencies, with what expected load factors, yields, cargo contribution, and operating costs, and how quickly those routes will mature as financing payments begin.

Biman is also heavily dependent on Middle East routes, where recent conflict has already raised airspace risks.

It is unclear whether the plan has been tested against prolonged airspace disruption, rerouting costs, higher fuel burns, or sudden demand shifts across the Gulf.

Some plans also depend on clearances not yet secured.

The proposed New York route would require Bangladesh to obtain Category 1 status under the US Federal Aviation Administration's International Aviation Safety Assessment programme.

Flights cancelled

FROM PAGE 1

An injured traveller told Reuters they saw something fly across the sky outside the airport before part of the ceiling near a departure gate collapsed.

Following the attack, US President Donald Trump, speaking to reporters outside the White House, was asked whether the United States planned to join Saudi strikes on the Houthis.

"We may. We're going to look at it. We just found out about the recent attack, so we'll make a decision. We move very quickly," he said.

Flight-tracking site flightradar24 showed all flights to Riyadh had either been diverted or cancelled, with only a helicopter hovering over the airport at one point.

Several carriers, including Kuwait Airways, Etihad Airways and Qatar Airways, said they had cancelled flights to and from the Saudi capital due to what it described as the closure of Riyadh airport because of the "security situation" there.

Meanwhile, Biman Bangladesh Airlines said in a press release yesterday that it suspended two Dhaka-Riyadh-Dhaka flights, BG339 and BG340, "until further notice due to unavoidable operational circumstances".

"Passengers booked on these flights are advised not to proceed to the airport. Biman management is actively reviewing the situation, and we will officially communicate a comprehensive update on the rescheduling or status of these flights tomorrow, October 11, 2026," it said, expressing "sincere apologies for the unexpected disruption".

Affected passengers have been advised to contact the Biman call center or visit their nearest Biman sales office for immediate assistance.

Thousands held

FROM PAGE 1

Yesterday morning, police boarded Dipke's plane as it landed at Delhi airport and detained him, alongside several other senior figures in the Cockroach movement. In a video recorded just before police detained him, Dipke said: "If you think you can stop us by threatening us with jail, then you have it wrong. Put us in jail if you want ... but we will keep fighting to protect the democracy of this country."

One of India's most popular YouTubers, Dhruv Rathee, who has 33 million followers and has become a supporter of the CJP, was among those put under house arrest.

Four former chief ministers from the opposition camp were also briefly detained. Former Bengal chief minister Mamata Banerjee, former Delhi chief minister Arvind Kejriwal, former Kerala chief minister Pinarayi Vijayan and former Tripura chief minister Manik Sarkar were detained as they tried to join the CJP protest.

In Mumbai, more than 400 protesters, including actor Imran Khan, were detained for "unauthorised gathering". It is not clear if they were released.

A group of lawyers, who were protesting in front of the Supreme Court, were also detained, but were released after the chief justice of India intervened.

Representatives of two digital news outlets said police briefly detained four of their reporters while they were covering the demonstrations. A Reuters journalist was also detained briefly before being released.

Meanwhile, India yesterday slammed the UN office for the high commissioner for human rights for its "arbitrary detention" comment as "unwarranted interference".

"We are concerned by reports of mass detentions in India of demonstrators, protest leaders, members of civil society organisations, lawyers and journalists, before and during today's large-scale demonstrations in Delhi," the UN office said in a statement.

"All those arbitrarily detained must be immediately and unconditionally released."

Student groups, who have also been calling for Kumar to resign, had described the march as India's "second freedom struggle", akin to Mahatma Gandhi's fight for independence. As police began mass detentions on Friday night, Neha Bora, a student leader at the forefront of the protests, said: "History is repeating itself. Just like in 1942, the arrest of leaders could not stop the Quit India movement; this movement will also not stop."

By yesterday afternoon, Bora had been detained.

Over its 14 years in power, the Modi government has been rigidly intolerant of dissent. However, few protests have prompted such a nationwide crackdown, signalling the government's concern that this unrest could present a serious political challenge.

In major disruption to travel, all trains arriving into Delhi's two main stations were cancelled yesterday for 10 hours, and almost 50 metro stations were shut. Delhi's schools and courtrooms were instructed to go online for the day, and hotel owners were told to turn away customers.

Traffic diversions were in place across Delhi, and police checkpoints were set up along the main highways from neighbouring states into the capital, with passengers being stopped and interrogated about their final destination. Delhi police told Uber drivers not to drop people near the protest area and said they were "tracking and stopping" bulk orders on food delivery services to Jantar Mantar.

Around Jantar Mantar, which had previously been Delhi's designated protest site, most of the main thoroughfares were shuttered and barricaded, surrounded by police and paramilitary officers. Riot-control vehicles and trucks fitted with water cannons stood nearby.

The revision of electoral rolls, in a process known as "special intensive revision (SIR), began last year and attracted criticism from civil society groups and the opposition alliance after it emerged that about 130 million names were deleted.

Opposition parties say the deletions affected the outcome of recent state elections won by the BJP. The commission says the removals relate to entries identified during the draft revision process and that any eligible voter incorrectly deleted can re-enrol.

The backlash grew when SIR was held in the state of West Bengal, and it became clear that Muslims and other minorities, who traditionally do not vote for BJP, were being disproportionately stripped of their vote.

Yet it didn't become an issue of national outrage until late last month, when the Indian Express newspaper published an investigation that exposed multiple irregularities in the SIR process, which had been flagged in more than a dozen internal objections but had been unilaterally overruled by Kumar.

Opposition parties, the Cockroach movement and student groups began to call for the resignation of Kumar, who was appointed by a committee led by Modi. This week, India's main opposition Congress party also tried to reach Jantar Mantar to protest but was blocked by police, and the Congress leader, Rahul Gandhi, was detained twice.

This week, the Indian Supreme Court ordered the Modi government and the election commission to respond to the allegations.

A child should never suffer twice

FROM PAGE 1

hearings. How does this prolonged delay compromise justice for child survivors?

Fowzul Azim: Delay is not merely an administrative bottleneck; time directly erodes evidence.

Over nearly four years, a child's memory can fade, witnesses may relocate or become unavailable, and families may succumb to social pressure, financial exhaustion or coercion to settle. Repeated court appearances also re-traumatise children.

Out-of-court settlements should therefore not be mistaken for survivors voluntarily abandoning cases. They are almost always driven by economic dependency, intimidation, procedural fatigue and lack of state protection for witnesses.

Although the 2025 amendment reduced the statutory trial limit from 180 to 90 days, halving the deadline achieves nothing unless underlying systemic and procedural bottlenecks are addressed.

TDS: How does the system fail when the alleged perpetrator is a parent, relative or trusted guardian?

Fowzul Azim: When a guardian, caregiver, teacher or family member is the alleged perpetrator, the child's primary avenue for seeking help is severed.

Such children face double vulnerability: first, when abusive family members silence them through intimidation or beatings; and second, when their own guardians accept money to settle with the accused during court proceedings.

If a father is accused, the question "Who will file the complaint?" exposes the inadequacy of simply advising the child to approach police. Children cannot navigate police procedures alone, are financially dependent, and other family members may rely on the accused for survival. State intervention therefore becomes essential.

Although the Children Act 2013 provides for child affairs police officers and probation officers, a vast gap remains between statutory provisions and implementation.

The most critical reform must be that an accused guardian immediately loses legal and protective guardianship over the child for the duration of proceedings.

The state must then arrange an independent legal guardian, social worker, probation officer, safe shelter, legal aid and emergency protection orders.

We need an unbroken protection pathway, from disclosure, immediate risk assessment, safe placement, independent legal representation and medical support to investigation, prosecution, child-sensitive trial and rehabilitation.

If one link breaks, the entire protective structure collapses.

TDS: If witnesses drop out or medical and DNA evidence is weak, what are the boundaries of a judge's role? Should judges take a more proactive stance?

Fowzul Azim: A judge cannot independently fill evidentiary gaps or assume the prosecution's role. The judiciary must remain neutral while ensuring the prosecution discharges its burden of proof.

However, judicial neutrality does not mean passivity. Under existing law, including safeguards under the Children Act 2013, courts can issue protective orders, compel witness attendance, recall key witnesses, record serious investigative lapses and direct corrective action.

But a judge cannot become a prosecutor. If investigators fail to secure crucial physical evidence or prosecutors fail to produce key witnesses, judges cannot build the case. Investigation quality remains the most important determinant of conviction rates.

Judges must instead exercise proactive case management within the bounds of judicial neutrality.

This requires rejecting repeated, unjustified adjournment requests; establishing structured witness calendars at the start of trials; and digitally monitoring investigation deadlines, charge-sheet submissions, forensic reports and reasons for adjournment.

Prosecutors must also be evaluated objectively using performance indicators, as recommended by the Supreme Court–BRAC study. Forensic and DNA laboratories should prioritise court-related work, while tribunals must be expanded in high-caseload districts. Otherwise, overwhelming caseloads will render the statutory 90-day limit meaningless.

TDS: What statutory reforms are necessary to make trials faster and genuinely child-sensitive?

Fowzul Azim: Existing laws already contain progressive provisions, including specialised court environments, child-sensitive seating, probation assistance and testimony safeguards under the Children Act 2013.

The question must shift from how strict new laws are to how effectively existing laws are enforced.

Bridging the gaps requires several reforms: a comprehensive Witness Protection Act; an independent child advocate or guardian system; mandatory psychosocial referrals upon disclosure; specialised, non-intimidating interview rooms with video-recorded evidence; pre-trial depositions for vulnerable child witnesses; procedures to shield children from accused guardians' influence; and mandatory coordination protocols binding police, social services, prosecutors and the judiciary.

Low conviction rates in child sexual violence cases cannot be treated as an isolated judicial issue. They reflect failures across a long chain involving families, educational institutions, police, medical services, forensic facilities, prosecution and rehabilitation systems.

Our ultimate objective must not merely be faster disposal of cases, but timely, accurate justice that prevents secondary victimisation.

Success means building a system where a child is never forced to suffer a second time in pursuit of justice.

Tk 60,000cr of taxpayers

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two crore need state support.

The same sum could fund a Tk 2,500 monthly subsidy for two crore families, or pay for two projects the size of the Padma bridge every year, he said.

"Rest assured, every depositor will get their money back," he said.

However, the damage to the economy and the financial system is serious and would take five to eight years to repair and would need public subsidies, he said.

"We want your cooperation so that this kind of plunder never happens again."

Roughly one-third of the money in the banking system had been plundered by the time he took charge in February, he said.

Withdrawal restrictions at Sommilito Islami Bank and National Bank have been eased, but the cost is high.

Regulations have been changed over the past four months to let firms such as Google Pay, Stripe and PayPal operate, he said, adding that their offices are not fully set up yet.

The central bank is also making sending money abroad easier and legal, and has permitted local providers to do so, which he said will shrink the demand for grey market transfers.

Printing and moving physical cash costs about Tk 20,000 crore a year and Bangla QR could cut this by at least 50 percent initially, he said.

Asked whether unlimited QR transfers invite fake payments to merchants who then hand back cash, he said the problem is temporary.

Person-to-person transfers are due from November, after which people will no longer need cash for them, he said, noting that China, India, Pakistan and Brazil went through the same transition.

A nationwide shift to Bangla QR could raise government revenue by up to Tk 2 lakh crore by closing leakages in tax and VAT collection, he said.

Cash-based trade makes evasion easy, particularly of VAT, while a digital transaction leaves a record, he said.

Citing Pakistan, where the tax-GDP ratio reached 10.3 percent in fiscal year 2025 amid wider digital and enforcement reforms, he said Bangladesh could expect a rise of at least 2 percentage points.

The real taxpayer is the consumer since businesses pass on costs and taxes, he said.

Charges of around 2.5 percent on other cashless methods are ultimately borne by buyers and QR payments are meant to lower that burden.

PM likely to visit Japan

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partnership: reimagining Bangladesh-KSA relations" at the Foreign Service Academy.

Describing Japan as one of Bangladesh's largest and longest-standing development partners, he said Japanese investment in several mega projects had helped strengthen economic ties and the broader relationship between the two countries.

At the invitation of the Japanese premier, Tarique previously joined an energy summit in Japan virtually when the country was facing an energy crisis.

The engagement had helped build the Japanese government's confidence in Bangladesh's PM, Humaiun said.

The forthcoming visit would feature detailed discussions on sector-specific cooperation and opportunities for reciprocal investment.

About the proposed visit to Saudi Arabia, he said the Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman had invited him and Tarique had accepted the invitation.

Salman has also expressed interest in visiting Bangladesh, according to Humaiun.



ADB Supports Advancing Bangladesh's Climate Action through BCDP Knowledge Conference 2026



The Bangladesh Climate Development Partnership (BCDP) Knowledge Conference 2026 brought together more than 500 participants from government, development partners, private sector, academia, and civil society.

Organized by the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC) with support from Asian Development Bank (ADB), the two-day conference focuses on translating national climate priorities into investment-ready projects and stronger partnerships.

There were specific sessions on plans like NAP and NDC along with sectoral sessions on transport, energy, housing and urban services, water resources, agriculture, adaptive social protection. Sessions on climate resilience and low carbon development, and readiness to investment made the conference discussions holistic.

A Call for Immediate Implementation ot the Plans

The conference emphasized implementing the NAP and NDC 3.0 with activity-level costing to give partners transparent visibility into intervention requirements. Participants further advocated for expanded nature-based solutions, insurance mechanisms, alignment with Global Goal on Adaptation indicators, decentralized financing, and joint tracking of contributions by different stakeholders.



"***Development decisions taken today will shape our vulnerability for decades to come. Every major investment should therefore consider the climate conditions under which it will operate.***"
— **Abdul Awal Mintoo**, MP, Minister, MoEFCC

A Story of Resilience, Not Only Vulnerability

The conference pressed for faster delivery. The discussants urged partners to track every project monthly and highlighted river restoration and mangrove plantation.

"***Let's accelerate our decision-making process. Otherwise, year after year we are running and we are unable to improve the situation.***"
— Shaikh Faridul Islam, MP, State Minister, MoEFCC



ADB Commits Further Support

ADB reaffirmed additional resources from the Climate Investment Fund to continue its technical assistance to BCDP upto 2028. ADB officials also mentioned US$250 million for coastal towns climate resilience project and US$200 million for power transmission and renewable energy project. Conference insights will inform ADB's 2028–2032 Country Partnership Strategy.



"***Climate ambition must be matched by climate investment. The true measure of success will not be the discussions in this conference, but the actions and investments that follow.***"
— **Satya Srinivash Lolla**, Executive Director, ADB

A Call for Programmatic Investment

ADB argued for landscape-level, programmatic investment over stand-alone projects, and for business models that can be replicated, such as rooftop solar supported by reliable tariff collection. It was stressed that scarce public money should be used to unlock private capital through guarantees and blended finance. Moreover, ADB reaffirmed continued support to BCDP.

"***Our investment, at the end of the day, needs to protect the people, strengthen their competitiveness and, more importantly, accelerate the low-carbon transformation.***"
— Qingfeng Zhang, Country Director, ADB



A Delta Under Pressure: Experts Chart the Path to Resilience and Low-Carbon Growth

"Bangladesh occupies just 7% of the Ganges-Brahmaputra-Meghna basin yet drains nearly 93% of its waters," noted keynote speaker Dr. Ahsan Uddin Ahmed, Former Member, Independent Technical Advisory Panel, Green Climate Fund, during the session on Pathways to Resilience and Low-Carbon Growth. Warning that embankments built for 1-in-20-year floods are increasingly strained by extreme events, he urged incentive-driven low-carbon development alongside knowledge-based adaptation.



Bangladesh Emphasizes on Turning Plans into Investments

The Bangladesh Climate Development Partnership (BCDP) Knowledge Conference 2026 opened with a message: the country's climate strategies are sound, and the priority now is delivery. Organized by the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change with the support from Asian Development Bank, the conference launched the BCDP portal. Inaugurating it, Minister Abdul Awal Mintoo, MP, said frameworks must become "coordinated programmes, well-prepared projects, appropriate financing and measurable outcomes," and set six priorities spanning implementation, project quality, finance, community participation, knowledge and accountability.

COP-31 Priorities

Dr. Fahmida Khanom, Acting Secretary, MoEFCC, stated that climate and biodiversity priorities are integrated across all ministerial budgets, highlighting adaptation finance, biodiversity, and a just transition as Bangladesh's COP-31 priorities.





"***The story of Bangladesh is of resilience and innovation. To sustain our progress, we need fair, grant-based climate finance, local ownership, and transparency***."
— Dr. Saimum Parvez, Special Assistant to the Prime Minister, Prime Minister's Office

Implementation of NAP Needs More Investment

Three years after its endorsement, the National Adaptation Plan (2023–2050) remains Bangladesh's cornerstone framework for climate resilience. Comprising 113 projects – including 90 high-priority actions – its implementation demands US$230 billion through 2050. While government budgets cover roughly 41% of needs and private capital just 5%, inadequate tracking systems continue to obscure actual spending.

From Targets to Delivery: NDC 3.0 Faces the Investment Test

Achieving NDC 3.0's target of cutting 84.97 million tonnes of emissions by 2035 requires shifting from policy design to capital investment. Panelists stressed prioritized, rigorously costed projects, seamless inter-ministerial alignment, predictable funding, and expenditure-based tracking. The discussants mentioned that, Article 6 of the Paris Agreement indicates carbon markets, and a just transition plan to make climate ambitions bankable and actionable.

Despite a 25% increase, the FY2026–27 climate budget of roughly Tk 51,000 crore (US$4 billion) falls short of requirements, underscoring the need for a medium-term roadmap and stronger domestic revenues. Panelists emphasized data-modeling and local-planning deficits, while pointing to key prospects in risk financing and project preparatory facilities.

From Policy Ambition to Bankable Action: BCDP Knowledge Conference Sets Architecture for Climate Resilience



The BCDP Knowledge Conference 2026 marked a defining milestone in Bangladesh's climate architecture, steering national strategy from policy declarations to structured capital mobilization and project delivery. Across high-level plenaries, the conference addressed the delta's critical imperatives - operationalizing the US$230 billion NAP (2023-2050) and achieving NDC 3.0's target of reducing 84.97 million tones of emissions by 2035.

Proceedings emphasized that fulfilling these commitments requires replacing fragmented initiatives with programmatic, landscape-level investments. As underscored during the session '***Climate Project Pipeline: From Readiness to Investment***,' closing Bangladesh's steep climate finance gap hinges on overcoming the acute deficit of investment-ready proposals. With impending LDC graduation narrowing traditional grant windows, financiers fund rigorously designed proposals rather than vulnerability in isolation. Transforming national priorities into investment projects requires meeting three core criteria: strategic policy alignment, technical and safeguard feasibility grounded in credible climate science, and verified financial viability.

To institutionalize this shift, panellists urged establishing a dedicated Climate Project Preparation Facility (PPF), integrating sector-specific screening checklists into the Planning Commission's Annual Development Programme (ADP), and accelerating Cabinet approval of the National Carbon Market Framework. Anchored by the BCDP, this coordinated approach ensures that public funds, multilateral co-financing, and private investment align to safeguard frontline communities and accelerate low-carbon growth.

Key Recommendations:

- **Establish a Unified Pipeline of Investment Projects:** Consolidate fragmented concepts into a single, prioritized national climate pipeline aligned with the NAP and NDC 3.0, backed by a dedicated PPF and streamlined ADP fast-track mechanisms to guarantee early design feasibility, safeguards, and investment readiness.
- **Anchor Proposals in Credible Climate Data and Innovative Financing:** Structure all funding proposals around verified scientific rationales, quantifiable emission or adaptation metrics, and bankable models - leveraging Paris Agreement Article 6 carbon market, blended finance, and multilateral co-financing to attract private and international finance.

Low-Carbon Growth and Development

Bangladesh's low-carbon transition demands decisive, concerted action: scaling electric mobility and resilient public transit, accelerating renewable energy and carbon-market finance, and embedding climate resilience into building standards. Affordable green finance, housing retrofits, coordinated municipal services, and community participation remain vital.

"***Do not build for today's climate alone. Build for the climate of the future***."
— Ahammad Sohel Monzoor, MP, State Minister, Ministry of Housing and Public Works (MoHPW)



Climate Adaptation and Resilience

Climate risk, rather than scarcity alone, now defines Bangladesh's water future. Experts urged adaptive basin-wide management, nature-based solutions, real-time data integration, transboundary cooperation, life-cycle infrastructure financing, and women-led community governance. Moving forward, key priorities center on developing bankable projects, streamlining climate finance access, and forging sustained partnerships across agriculture, fisheries, livestock, and social protection.



"***Meeting climate challenges demands collective effort, both to mitigate its causes and to build climate-adaptive solutions.***"
— Forhad Hossain Azad, MP, State Minister, Ministry of Water Resources (MoWR)

Organized by: Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change
Supported by: Asian Development Bank

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০৪ অক্টোবর ২০২৬

নিয়োগ বিজ্ঞপ্তি

বাংলাদেশ কোস্ট গার্ডে অসামরিক জনবলের নিম্নবর্ণিত রাজস্বখাতভুক্ত শূন্য পদে অস্থায়ী ভিত্তিতে বিধিমোতাবেক সরাসরি নিয়োগের জন্য শর্তসাপেক্ষে বাংলাদেশের প্রকৃত নাগরিকদের নিকট হইতে অনলাইনে (https://jobs.coastguard.gov.bd/) নির্ধারিত সময়ের মধ্যে আবেদনপত্র আহ্বান করা যাচ্ছে। অনলাইন (Online) ব্যতীত অন্য কোন মাধ্যমে প্রেরিত আবেদন গ্রহণ করা হবে না:

ক্র: নং	পদের নাম, গ্রেড ও বেতন স্কেল	পদের সংখ্যা ও ধরণ	প্রয়োজনীয় যোগ্যতা
(ক)	(খ)	(গ)	(ঘ)
১।	সাঁটলিপিকার-কাম-কম্পিউটার অপারেটর (গ্রেড- ১৩) (২৪০০০-৫৮০০০)	০১ (এক) টি স্থায়ী পদ	(ক) কোনো স্বীকৃত বিশ্ববিদ্যালয় হইতে অন্যূন দ্বিতীয় শ্রেণি বা সমমানের সিজিপিএতে স্নাতক বা সমমানের ডিগ্রি; এবং (খ) কম্পিউটার ব্যবহারে দক্ষতা।
২।	সাঁটমুদ্রাক্ষরিক-কাম-কম্পিউটার অপারেটর (গ্রেড- ১৪) (২৩৫০০-৫৬৮০০)	০৫ (পাঁচ) টি স্থায়ী পদ	(ক) কোনো স্বীকৃত বিশ্ববিদ্যালয় হইতে অন্যূন দ্বিতীয় শ্রেণি বা সমমানের সিজিপিএতে স্নাতক বা সমমানের ডিগ্রি; এবং (খ) কম্পিউটার ব্যবহারে দক্ষতা।
৩।	ইউ.ডি.এ/কম্পিউটার অপারেটর (গ্রেড- ১৪) (২৩৫০০-৫৬৮০০)	০৩ (তিন) টি স্থায়ী পদ	(ক) কোনো স্বীকৃত বিশ্ববিদ্যালয় হইতে যে কোন বিভাগে অন্যূন ২য় শ্রেণির বা সমমানের স্নাতক ডিগ্রী; এবং (খ) কম্পিউটার পরিচালনায় মানসমপন্ন জ্ঞান।
৪।	অটোমেকানিক (গ্রেড- ১৪) (২৩৫০০-৫৬৮০০)	০২ (দুই) টি স্থায়ী পদ	(ক) কোনো স্বীকৃত বোর্ড হইতে মাধ্যমিক স্কুল সার্টিফিকেট (এস.এস.সি) বা সমমানের পরীক্ষায় অন্যূন ২য় বিভাগে উত্তীর্ণ; এবং (খ) কোন স্বীকৃত কারিগরি প্রশিক্ষণ কেন্দ্র (টি.টি.সি)বা ইনস্টিটিউট বা প্রতিষ্ঠান হইতে সংশ্লিষ্ট বিষয়ে ১(এক) বৎসর মেয়াদি অন্যূন ২য় শ্রেণির বা সমমানের ট্রেড কোর্স সনদপ্রাপ্ত।
৫।	ড্রাইভার (গ্রেড- ১৫) (২২৮০০-৫২২০০)	২৫ (পঁচিশ) টি স্থায়ী পদ	(ক) কোনো স্বীকৃত বোর্ড হইতে জুনিয়র স্কুল সার্টিফিকেট বা সমমানের পরীক্ষায় উত্তীর্ণ; (খ) ভারী গাড়ি চালনার বৈধ ভারী ড্রাইভিং লাইসেন্স; এবং (গ) অভিজ্ঞতাসম্পন্ন চালকগণ অগ্রাধিকার পাইবেন।
৬।	অফিস সহকারী-কাম-কম্পিউটার মুদ্রাক্ষরিক (গ্রেড- ১৬) (২১৯০০-৫২৯০০)	০১ (এক) টি স্থায়ী পদ	(ক) কোনো স্বীকৃত বোর্ড হইতে অন্যূন দ্বিতীয় বিভাগ বা সমমানের জিপিএতে উচ্চ মাধ্যমিক সার্টিফিকেট বা সমমানের পরীক্ষায় উত্তীর্ণ; এবং (খ) কম্পিউটার ব্যবহারে দক্ষতা।
৭।	অফিস সহায়ক (গ্রেড- ২০) (২০০০০-৪৮৪০০)	০১ (এক) টি স্থায়ী পদ	কোনো স্বীকৃত বোর্ড হইতে মাধ্যমিক স্কুল সার্টিফিকেট বা সমমানের পরীক্ষায় উত্তীর্ণ।

আবেদনের শর্তাবলি:

০১। প্রার্থীকে অবশ্যই বাংলাদেশের প্রকৃত নাগরিক হতে হবে।

০২। ৩১/১০/২০২৬ খ্রিঃ তারিখে প্রার্থীদের বয়সসীমা ১৮-৩২ বছর হতে হবে। তবে,
(ক) বয়স নির্ধারণের ক্ষেত্রে আবেদনের শেষ তারিখের মধ্যে সরকার কর্তৃক জারিকৃত সর্বশেষ প্রজ্ঞাপন প্রযোজ্য হবে।
(খ) বয়স প্রমাণের ক্ষেত্রে কোন প্রকার এফিডেভিট গ্রহণযোগ্য হবে না।

০৩। আবেদনকারীকে তার সর্বশেষ অর্জিত শিক্ষাগত যোগ্যতার তথ্য আবশ্যিকভাবে উল্লেখ করতে হবে।

০৪। নির্ধারিত তফসিল অনুযায়ী সকল পদের লিখিত ও মৌখিক পরীক্ষা এবং প্রযোজ্য ক্ষেত্রে ব্যবহারিক পরীক্ষা অনুষ্ঠিত হবে। লিখিত/মৌখিক/ ব্যবহারিক/অন্য কোন পরীক্ষায় অংশগ্রহণের জন্য কোন প্রকার টিএ/ডিএ/ভাতা প্রদান করা হবে না।

০৫। অসত্য/ভুল তথ্য সংবলিত/ত্রুটিপূর্ণ আবেদনপত্র কোন কারণ দর্শানো ব্যতিরেকে বাতিল বলে গণ্য হবে। প্রার্থী কর্তৃক দাখিলকৃত/প্রদত্ত কোন তথ্য বা কাগজপত্র নিয়োগ কার্যক্রমের যে কোন পর্যায়ে বা নিয়োগ প্রাপ্তির পরেও অসত্য/ভুয়া প্রমাণিত হলে তার দরখাস্ত/নির্বাচন/নিয়োগ বাতিল করা হবে এবং মিথ্যা/ভুল তথ্য সরবরাহ করার জন্য তার বিরুদ্ধে আইনগত/প্রশাসনিক ব্যবস্থা গ্রহণ করা হবে।

০৬। মৌখিক পরীক্ষার সময় নিম্নবর্ণিত কাগজ/সনদপত্রের মূল কপি সঙ্গে আনতে হবে :
(ক) শিক্ষাগত যোগ্যতা সম্পর্কিত সকল প্রকার মূল/সাময়িক সনদপত্র, অভিজ্ঞতা সনদ (যদি থাকে) এর কপি;
(খ) প্রথম শ্রেণির গেজেটেড কর্মকর্তা কর্তৃক প্রদত্ত চারিত্রিক সনদপত্র;
(গ) সংশ্লিষ্ট ইউনিয়ন পরিষদের চেয়ারম্যান/পৌরসভার/সিটি কর্পোরেশনের যথাযথ কর্তৃপক্ষ কর্তৃক প্রদত্ত নাগরিকত্ব সনদপত্র;
(ঘ) জাতীয় পরিচয়পত্র/জন্মনিবন্ধন সনদ;
(ঙ) মুক্তিযোদ্ধা/শহিদ মুক্তিযোদ্ধা/বীরাঙ্গনার সন্তান কোটার প্রার্থীকে আবেদনপত্রের সাথে মুক্তিযুদ্ধ বিষয়ক মন্ত্রণালয়ের সর্বশেষ প্রজ্ঞাপন মোতাবেক তার পিতা/মাতার মুক্তিযোদ্ধা সার্টিফিকেট (উপযুক্ত কর্তৃপক্ষ কর্তৃক স্বাক্ষরিত ও প্রতিস্বাক্ষরিত) এর ফটোকপি ১ম শ্রেণির গেজেটেড কর্মকর্তা কর্তৃক সত্যায়িত (পদবি ও নামের সিলসহ) করে সংযুক্ত করতে হবে;
(চ) মুক্তিযোদ্ধা/শহিদ মুক্তিযোদ্ধা/বীরাঙ্গনার সন্তান কোটায় আবেদনকারীকে মুক্তিযোদ্ধা/শহিদ মুক্তিযোদ্ধা/বীরাঙ্গনার সাথে সম্পর্ক উল্লেখপূর্বক স্ব স্ব ইউনিয়ন পরিষদের চেয়ারম্যান/পৌরসভার মেয়র/সিটি কর্পোরেশনের মেয়র অথবা সংশ্লিষ্ট প্রতিষ্ঠানের কাউন্সিলর কর্তৃক প্রদত্ত প্রত্যয়ন পত্র দাখিল করতে হবে;
(ছ) ক্ষুদ্র নৃ-গোষ্ঠী প্রার্থীদের ক্ষেত্রে সংশ্লিষ্ট জেলা প্রশাসক কর্তৃক প্রদত্ত সনদপত্র;
(জ) শারীরিক প্রতিবন্ধী কোটার ক্ষেত্রে উপযুক্ত কর্তৃপক্ষ কর্তৃক প্রদত্ত সনদপত্র;
(ঝ) তৃতীয় লিঙ্গের কোটার ক্ষেত্রে উপযুক্ত কর্তৃপক্ষ কর্তৃক প্রদত্ত সনদপত্র;
(ঞ) প্রার্থীকে তার কোটা দাবির স্বপক্ষে যথাযথ কর্তৃপক্ষ কর্তৃক প্রদত্ত সনদ/প্রমাণপত্রের সনদ;
(ট) ডাউনলোডকৃত Applicant's copy এর সত্যায়িত কপি; এবং
(ঠ) লিখিত পরীক্ষার প্রবেশপত্রের মূলকপি/সত্যায়িত ফটোকপি।

০৭। সরকারি, আধা-সরকারি ও স্বায়ত্তশাসিত প্রতিষ্ঠানে কর্মরত প্রার্থীদের অবশ্যই সকল শর্তপূরণ সাপেক্ষে যথাযথ কর্তৃপক্ষের অনুমতিক্রমে আবেদন করতে হবে। মৌখিক পরীক্ষার সময় সকল চাকরিরত প্রার্থীকে নিয়োগকারী কর্তৃপক্ষ কর্তৃক প্রদত্ত অনাপত্তিপত্রের মূল কপি জমা দিতে হবে। এক্ষেত্রে কোনো অগ্রিম কপি গ্রহণ করা হবে না।

০৮। বিজ্ঞপ্তিতে প্রকাশিত শূন্যপদের সংখ্যা কর্তৃপক্ষ হ্রাস/বৃদ্ধি করতে পারবে।

০৯। কোনো কারণ দর্শানো ব্যতিরেকে কর্তৃপক্ষ নিয়োগ প্রক্রিয়া স্থগিত/বাতিল/প্রত্যাহার করার ক্ষমতা সংরক্ষণ করে।

১০। কেবলমাত্র যোগ্য প্রার্থীদের নির্ধারিত তারিখে লিখিত পরীক্ষা গ্রহণ করা হবে এবং লিখিত পরীক্ষায় উত্তীর্ণ প্রার্থীদের (প্রযোজ্য ক্ষেত্রে ব্যবহারিক) ও মৌখিক পরীক্ষায় অংশগ্রহণ করবেন।

১১। নিয়োগকৃত পদে নিয়োগ ও চাকরির ক্ষেত্রে সরকার কর্তৃক সর্বশেষ জারিকৃত বিধিবিধান প্রযোজ্য হবে।

১২। নিয়োগের ক্ষেত্রে সরকারের সর্বশেষ কোটা নীতি ও পদ্ধতি অনুসরণ করা হবে।

১৩। বিজ্ঞপ্তিটি বাংলাদেশ কোস্ট গার্ডের ওয়েব সাইটে (www.coastguard.gov.bd) তে পাওয়া যাবে। এছাড়াও জাতীয় টিভি চ্যানেলসমূহে প্রকাশিত হবে।

১৪। **অনলাইনে আবেদনপত্র পূরণ ও দাখিল করার নিয়মাবলি ও শর্তাবলি:**

ক. আগ্রহী প্রার্থীগণ https://jobs.coastguard.gov.bd/ এই ওয়েবসাইটে আবেদনপত্র পূরণ করতে পারবেন। আবেদনের সময়সীমা নিম্নরূপ:
i) Online-এ আবেদনপত্র পূরণ ও আবেদন ফি জমাদান শুরুর তারিখ ও সময়: ১১/১০/২০২৬ তারিখ সকাল ১০:০০ টা।
ii) Online-এ আবেদনপত্র জমাদানের শেষ তারিখ ও সময়: ৩১/১০/২০২৬ তারিখ বিকাল ০৫:০০ টা।
iii) উক্ত সময়ের মধ্যে https://jobs.coastguard.gov.bd/ এ Registration সম্পন্ন করা প্রার্থীগণ Online- এ আবেদনপত্র Submit এর সময় থেকে পরবর্তী ৭২(বাহাত্তর) ঘন্টার মধ্যে Make Payment বাটনে ক্লিক করে যেকোনো অনলাইন ব্যাংকিং এর মাধ্যমে পরীক্ষার ফি জমা দিতে পারবেন।

খ. Online-এ আবেদনপত্রে প্রার্থী তার স্বাক্ষর (দৈর্ঘ্য ৩০০× প্রস্থ ৮০ pixel) ও অনধিক ০৩ (তিন) মাসের মধ্যে তোলা রঙ্গিন ছবি (দৈর্ঘ্য ৩০০ × প্রস্থ ৩০০ pixel) স্ক্যান করে নির্ধারিত স্থানে Upload করবেন। ছবির সাইজ সর্বোচ্চ ১০০ KB ও স্বাক্ষর ৬০ KB হতে হবে।

গ. Online এ আবেদনপত্রে পূরণকৃত তথ্যই যেহেতু পরবর্তী সকল কার্যক্রমে ব্যবহৃত হবে, সেহেতু Online-এ আবেদনপত্র Submit করার পূর্বেই পূরণকৃত সকল তথ্যের সঠিকতা সম্পর্কে প্রার্থী নিজে নিশ্চিত হবেন।

ঘ. প্রার্থী Online এ পূরণকৃত আবেদনপত্রের একটি রঙিন প্রিন্ট কপি পরীক্ষা সংক্রান্ত যেকোন প্রয়োজনে সহায়ক হিসেবে সংরক্ষণ করবেন এবং মৌখিক পরীক্ষার সময় এক কপি জমা দেবেন।

ঙ. **পরীক্ষার ফি প্রদান:** Online-এ আবেদনপত্র (Application Form) যথাযথভাবে পূরণ করে নির্দেশনা মোতাবেক ছবি এবং স্বাক্ষর upload করে আবেদনপত্র Submit সম্পন্ন হলে কম্পিউটারে ছবিসহ Application Preview দেখা যাবে। যদি Applicant's Copy তে কোন তথ্য ভুল থাকে বা অস্পষ্ট ছবি (সম্পূর্ণ কালো/সম্পূর্ণ সাদা/ঘোলা) বা ছবি/স্বাক্ষর সঠিক না থাকে তাহলে পুনরায় আবেদন করতে পারবেন। তবে আবেদন ফি জমাদানের পরে আর কোনো পরিবর্তন/পরিমার্জন/পরিবর্ধন গ্রহণযোগ্য নয় বিধায় আবেদন ফি জমাদানের পূর্বে প্রার্থী অবশ্যই উক্ত Applicant's Copy তে তার অনধিক ০৩ (তিন) মাসের মধ্যে তোলা রঙিন ছবি, নির্ভুল তথ্য ও স্বাক্ষর সংযুক্ত থাকা এবং এর সঠিকতার বিষয়টি PDF copy ডাউনলোডপূর্বক নিশ্চিত হয়ে রঙিন প্রিন্ট করে সংরক্ষণ করবেন। আবেদন সম্পন্ন হওয়ার পর প্রার্থীকে এডমিট কার্ড সংগ্রহের জন্য নির্ধারিত ফি প্রদান করতে হবে। প্রার্থীকে অবশ্যই আবেদন করার ৭২ ঘন্টার মধ্যে পেমেন্ট সম্পন্ন করতে হবে। নির্ধারিত সময়ের মধ্যে পেমেন্ট সম্পন্ন না করলে আবেদনটি বাতিল হয়ে যাবে।
পেমেন্ট করার জন্য প্রার্থীকে Make Payment বাটনে ক্লিক করতে হবে। এরপর Online Banking অথবা Banking Card থেকে পছন্দের পেমেন্ট মাধ্যম নির্বাচন করতে হবে। Online Banking নির্বাচন করলে তালিকা থেকে পছন্দের ব্যাংক নির্বাচন করে প্রয়োজনীয় তথ্য সঠিকভাবে প্রদান করতে হবে। এরপর আবেদনকৃত চাকরির জন্য নির্ধারিত ফি প্রদান করে পেমেন্ট প্রক্রিয়া সম্পন্ন করতে হবে। Banking Card নির্বাচন করলে কার্ডের প্রয়োজনীয় তথ্য প্রদান করে নির্ধারিত ফি পরিশোধ করতে হবে। bKash নির্বাচন করলে প্রার্থীর bKash নম্বর প্রদান করতে হবে। এরপর bKash থেকে প্রাপ্ত OTP প্রদান করে পেমেন্টের পরবর্তী ধাপে যেতে হবে। পেমেন্ট নিশ্চিত করার জন্য প্রার্থীর bKash PIN প্রদান করতে হবে। প্রয়োজনীয় তথ্য সঠিকভাবে প্রদান করে পেমেন্ট সম্পন্ন হলে সিস্টেমে পেমেন্ট সফল হওয়ার বার্তা প্রদর্শিত হবে। পেমেন্ট সফলভাবে সম্পন্ন হলে প্রার্থী পরবর্তী ধাপে এডমিট কার্ড সংগ্রহ বা ডাউনলোড করতে পারবেন।
সতর্কতা: নিরাপত্তার স্বার্থে bKash OTP ও PIN কারও সঙ্গে শেয়ার করা যাবে না।
পরীক্ষার ফি বাবদ প্রতিটি পদের (গ্রেড: ১৩-১৬) জন্য জনপ্রতি ১১২/- টাকা এবং প্রতিটি পদের (গ্রেড: ১৭-২০) জন্য জনপ্রতি ৫৬/- টাকা। তবে, অনগ্রসর নাগরিক (ক্ষুদ্র নৃ-গোষ্ঠী, শারীরিক প্রতিবন্ধী ও তৃতীয় লিঙ্গ) প্রার্থীদের ক্ষেত্রে সকল পদের জন্য আবেদন ফি বাবদ ৫৬/- টাকা অনধিক ৭২(বাহাত্তর) ঘন্টার মধ্যে জমা দিবেন। এখানে বিশেষভাবে উল্লেখ্য যে Online-এ আবেদনপত্রের সকল অংশ পূরণ করে Submit করা হলেও পরীক্ষার ফি জমা না দেওয়া পর্যন্ত Online আবেদনপত্র কোন অবস্থাতেই গৃহীত হবে না।

চ. Online আবেদনপত্রে প্রার্থীর নিজ নামে নিবন্ধিত মোবাইল নম্বরে পরীক্ষা সংক্রান্ত যাবতীয় যোগাযোগ সম্পন্ন করা হবে। উক্ত নম্বরটি সার্বক্ষণিক সচল রাখা, SMS পড়া এবং প্রাপ্ত নির্দেশনা তাৎক্ষণিকভাবে অনুসরণ করতে হবে।

ছ. SMS এর মাধ্যমে পরবর্তীতে পরীক্ষার তারিখ, সময় ও স্থান/কেন্দ্রের নাম ইত্যাদি তথ্য প্রার্থীকে জানিয়ে দেয়া হবে। প্রার্থী https://jobs.coastguard.gov.bd/ এ ইমেইল এবং পাসওয়ার্ড দিয়ে লগইন করে প্রবেশপত্র Download পূর্বক প্রিন্ট করে নেবেন। প্রার্থী প্রবেশপত্রটি প্রতিটি পরীক্ষায় (লিখিত/ব্যবহারিক/মৌখিক) অংশগ্রহণের সময়ে অবশ্যই প্রদর্শন করবেন।

জ. প্রার্থীগণ Forget Password বাটনে ক্লিক করে নিজেদের পাসওয়ার্ড পুনরুদ্ধার করতে পারবেন। Forget Password ক্লিক করলে প্রার্থীগণকে ফোন নাম্বার দিতে হবে। উক্ত ফোন নাম্বারে প্রার্থীগণকে একটি নতুন পাসওয়ার্ড প্রদান করা হবে।

ঝ. Online-এ আবেদন এবং টাকা জমার কাজটি প্রার্থী নিজে করবেন। এক্ষেত্রে অন্য কোনো মাধ্যম থেকে উক্ত কাজটি সম্পন্ন করে প্রার্থী প্রতারিত হলে কর্তৃপক্ষ দায়ী থাকবে না।

ঞ. বিজ্ঞপ্তিটি পত্রিকা ছাড়াও বাংলাদেশ কোস্ট গার্ডের ওয়েবপোর্টাল www.coastguard.gov.bd এবং https://jobs.coastguard.gov.bd/ ওয়েবসাইটে সরাসরি প্রবেশ করেও পাওয়া যাবে। নিয়োগ পরীক্ষার তারিখ, সময় ও অন্যান্য তথ্য www.coastguard.gov.bd এবং https://jobs.coastguard.gov.bd/ ওয়েবসাইট হতে জানা যাবে।

ট. Online-এ আবেদন করতে কোন সমস্যা হলে job@creativesofttechnology.com এবং bcgcivilrecruit@gmail.com ই-মেইল এ যোগাযোগ করা যাবে। Mail এর subject এ Organization Name: BCG. Post Name: ********** Applicants User ID ও Contact Number অবশ্যই উল্লেখ করতে হবে।

ঠ. প্রার্থীকে অনলাইন আবেদনপত্রের ডিক্লারেশন অংশে এই মর্মে ঘোষণা দিতে হবে যে, প্রার্থী কর্তৃক আবেদনপত্রে প্রদত্ত সকল তথ্য সঠিক এবং সত্য। প্রদত্ত তথ্য অসত্য বা মিথ্যা প্রমাণিত হলে অথবা কোনো অযোগ্যতা ধরা পড়লে বা কোনো প্রতারণা বা দুর্নীতির আশ্রয় গ্রহণ করলে কিংবা পরীক্ষায় নকল বা অসদুপায় অবলম্বন করলে, পরীক্ষার পূর্বে বা পরে এমনকি নিয়োগের পরে যেকোন পর্যায়ে প্রার্থীতা বাতিল করা হবে এবং সংশ্লিষ্ট প্রার্থীর বিরুদ্ধে আইনগত ব্যবস্থা গ্রহণ করা যাবে।

ড. আবেদন শুরুর তারিখ: ১১/১০/২০২৬ এবং শেষ তারিখ: ৩১/১০/২০২৬ পর্যন্ত, শেষ তারিখ ও সময়ের জন্য অপেক্ষা না করে হাতে যথেষ্ট সময় নিয়ে এ আবেদনপত্র পূরণ ও আবেদন ফি জমাদান করতে পরামর্শ দেয়া হচ্ছে।

১৫। নিয়োগ সংক্রান্ত যেকোন বিষয়ে নিয়োগকারী কর্তৃপক্ষের সিদ্ধান্তই চূড়ান্ত বলে গণ্য হবে।

বাংলাদেশ কোস্ট গার্ড অধিদপ্তরের ওয়েবসাইটে প্রবেশের QR Code

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ক্যাপ্টেন, বিএন
সভাপতি
বিভাগীয় নির্বাচন কমিটি

GD-2461

Workshop on climate negotiations held at BYLC



PHOTO: COURTESY OF BYLC

STAR REPORT

Bangladesh Youth Leadership Center (BYLC), the Department of Environment (DoE), and the Alliance for Sustainable Development Foundation yesterday jointly organised a workshop to prepare young people to understand and take part in international climate negotiations ahead of COP31, which will take place in Antalya, Türkiye, this November.

The workshop, titled "Climate Change Negotiation", was held at BYLC headquarters in Dhaka. More than 50 youths committed to climate action took part, including some who will attend COP31.

Sessions covered the UNFCCC process, the Paris Agreement, Nationally Determined Contributions, climate finance, adaptation, loss and damage, and leadership for climate justice. Participants also practised negotiation strategies and discussed the climate challenges facing Bangladesh.

Dr Fazle Rabbi Sadeque Ahmed, adviser to the Climate Change and Disaster Management Division at the Center for Environmental and Geographic Information Services; Mirza Shawkat Ali, director (Climate Change and International Convention) at DoE, and Ejaj Ahmad, founder and executive chairperson of BYLC, spoke at the event.



Brothers Babul Das and Mantu Das working at their shop in Barishal city. PHOTO: STAR

Festive beats, fading fortunes

Traditional percussion makers, artistes struggle as demand dwindles

SUSHANTA GHOSH *and* **AMINUL ISLAM**

Durga Puja was once a busy season for traditional percussion instrument makers and artistes.

The rhythmic beats of the dhak, dhol, dholok and khol remain an integral part of the festival, but demand for these instruments has been declining, leaving makers and artistes struggling to earn a living.

At Jal Taranga, a 60-year-old musical instrument shop in Barishal city, brothers Babul Das and Mantu Das sat glumly yesterday, having received no customers throughout the day.

"Previously, we used to make and sell around 10 dhaks every year, with most orders coming ahead of Durga Puja. This year, not a single order came for making dhak or dhol even as Durga Puja is here. Instead, we got only a handful of work on repairing old instruments, which hardly brings much earning," said Babul.

Mantu said a dhak sells for Tk 12,000-15,000, a dhol for Tk 5,000-6,000, a khol for Tk 3,000 and a dugi-table set for Tk 7,000.

The brothers said their family had been making, selling and repairing percussion instruments since their grandfather's time.

Making these instruments is time-consuming, while sourcing neem wood, commonly used in their production, has become increasingly difficult, they said.

Ganesh Das, a prominent tabla artiste in Barishal, said fewer people were learning to play traditional musical instruments, reducing demand and making it difficult for trainers to earn a living.

Suvash Chandra Das, proprietor of Taal Torongo, a musical instrument shop in Mymensingh city, also reported disappointing sales ahead of Durga Puja.

Raj Kumar Das, a noted dhol artiste in Mymensingh with a four-decade career, said the profession's seasonal nature made it difficult to survive, as demand rises only during Durga Puja and Kali Puja but remains low for much of the year.

"This is my ancestral profession. I was trained by my father, Mohan Banshi Das, before learning the skill further under the tutelage of Ustad Helal Munshi and Baul artiste Sunil Karmakar. However, earning a livelihood by playing traditional percussion has not been easy," he said.

Raj Kumar, who trains aspiring dhol players from across the country, said most came from low-income families and needed greater patronage to continue in the profession.

OBITUARY

Abdul Muntaquim passes away

CITY DESK



Barrister Abdul Muntaquim Chaudhury passed away in Melbourne, Australia, yesterday. He was 97.

Born on September 2, 1929, Abdul Muntaquim was a politician, lawyer and organiser of the Liberation War.

He served as a member of the Pakistan National Assembly and, after independence, became a member of the Constituent Assembly and helped draft the Constitution.

In 1973, he was appointed Bangladesh's ambassador to Japan and later served as ambassador to the German Democratic Republic. He was also the founding executive director of the Bangladesh Legal Aid and Services Trust.

Abdul Muntaquim completed his IA at Aligarh Muslim University, studied at Santiniketan and St Xavier's College, and earned his bachelor's degree from the University of Calcutta.

Journalist Amir Khasru no more

STAFF CORRESPONDENT



Veteran journalist Amir Khasru died at Bangladesh Medical University in Dhaka yesterday while undergoing treatment. He was 64. He breathed his last around 7:00pm, his daughter Sadia Afrin confirmed.

Khasru had been suffering from various kidney and liver-related complications. He is survived by his wife, a son and a daughter.

He was a former Bangladesh correspondent for Voice of America and a diplomatic correspondent for the daily Ittefaq. He also served as executive editor of the weekly Budhbar. The family has yet to decide where and when he will be buried, Sadia said.

Ahmed Yaqub Jamil dies

CITY DESK



Ahmed Yaqub Jamil (Bapu), former general manager of BEPZA, died at a private hospital in Dhaka on Thursday, aged 81.

He left behind his wife and a daughter. His first namaz-e-janaza was held after Juma prayers at Gulshan Azad Masjid. His second janaza was held at his former residence, 99 Shantinagar.

He was laid to rest at Azimpur Graveyard.

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Question leak derails exam, sparks protests

Job seekers block roads in Dhaka; test tentatively rescheduled for Oct 16

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A Department of Youth Development recruitment exam was postponed at the last minute yesterday following a question paper leak, triggering protests by job seekers and severe traffic congestion across the capital.

The exam for assistant upazila youth development officer was scheduled to begin at 11:00am but was suspended shortly beforehand.

Agitated candidates blocked roads near exam centres and major intersections for around two hours, causing gridlock in Motijheel, Shahbagh, Dhanmondi, Manik Mia Avenue, Mohammadpur, Nilkhet and other areas.

"We came to Dhaka to sit for the exam. Just 30 minutes before it was supposed to start, we were informed that it was postponed due to a question leak," said Md Helal, an examinee protesting in Nilkhet.

"Even if they hold it later, this sudden suspension has caused us immense suffering. We suspect there is an ulterior motive here, and we are protesting this farce," he added.

SEE PAGE 9 COL 4



A rickshaw, motorcycles and a car in the background occupy Chattogram's first dedicated cycle track in South Patenga area yesterday, just a day after its inauguration.

PHOTO: RAJIB RAIHAN

IN FOCUS

Radda health centre rises from ruins

Renovated facility reopens after Sept 24 attack; full services to resume in days

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Radda MCH-FP Health Care Centre in Mirpur-1, which was vandalised during a midnight attack, has been renovated and reopened, although full services are yet to resume.

State Minister for Youth and Sports Aminul Haque inaugurated the renovated facility yesterday.

During a visit yesterday, the main building was found freshly painted, with new doors, windows, glass panes, electric fans and curtains installed.

The damaged boundary walls have been rebuilt, a new tin-shed canopy installed inside the main entrance, and the staff dining area repaired. A new signboard has also been erected.

However, full services will take a few more days to resume as furniture and medical equipment are still being arranged. Some old furniture is being brought from Radda's Mirpur-10 branch.

Nasrin Akhtar, executive director of the centre, said more medical equipment and furniture were needed to provide proper care. Some looted items had been recovered, but their usability was yet to be assessed.



PHOTO: COLLECTED

The renovated Radda health centre in Mirpur.

Aminul said law enforcers had arrested several suspects and recovered two truckloads of looted goods, which would be returned to the institution following legal procedures.

Regarding the disputed land lease and a 2006 plot allocation linked to an association, Aminul said discussions had been held with the housing minister and the National Housing Authority. The matter must be resolved through lawful dialogue, he added.

On the night of September 24, over 200 masked individuals armed with local weapons allegedly broke into the centre, held security guards hostage and looted medicines, vaccines, medical equipment and other materials. They also used heavy machinery to demolish parts of the facility.

Following the attack, health workers began administering measles-rubella and other EPI vaccines to children outdoors under a tarpaulin canopy outside the main gate on September 26.

After clearing the damaged rooms, the centre gradually resumed limited indoor services.

Toufique Imrose Khalidi laid to rest amid tributes



A man signs a condolence book as people from different walks of life pay their last respects to bdnews24.com editor-in-chief Toufique Imrose Khalidi yesterday.

PHOTO: COLLECTED

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Family members, colleagues, friends and well-wishers bade a final farewell to Toufique Imrose Khalidi yesterday, remembering the late bdnews24.com editor-in-chief for his courage, commitment to independent journalism and the institution he built.

Khalidi was laid to rest at the Martyred Intellectuals Graveyard in Mirpur around 5:00pm.

Earlier, his namaz-e-janaza was held at the Old DOHS playground in Banani at 3:30pm, attended by journalists, politicians, cultural personalities and people from different walks of life. His body was brought to the venue around 2:30pm.

Before the janaza, bdnews24.com Chief

SEE PAGE 9 COL 3

'You have not failed. We have failed as a society'

CAMPE executive director tells SSC students; govt considers allowing retakes within 3 months

6,90,608 candidates initially failed SSC, equivalent exams	4,585 passed after answer-script re-scrutiny	PM directs ministry to prepare career pathways for students	Govt plans teacher assessment system	Students demand better learning facilities

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Saima Akter, an SSC examinee from Munshiganj, had done well in her other subjects but failed chemistry. She blamed curriculum changes and delays in receiving textbooks for leaving her with less time to prepare.

"I completely broke down," she told a conference in the capital yesterday.

Too distressed to seek a review of her answer script, she also alleged that some teachers encouraged paid coaching instead of teaching adequately in class.

Saima was speaking at the "Challenged Students Conference 2026", organised by Campaign for Popular Education (CAMPE) and Plan International Bangladesh at the Bangladesh-China Friendship Conference Centre.

The SSC and equivalent results, published on August 10, showed that 6,90,608 candidates, or 37.75 percent, had failed. Of them, 4,585 later passed following answer-script re-scrutiny, according to revised results published on September 10.

At the programme, Prime Minister's Adviser Mahdi Amin said the government would consider allowing SSC candidates to re-sit examinations in failed subjects within three months instead of waiting a year.

Mahdi said the PM had directed the education ministry to identify students who failed or did not achieve their expected results and prepare career pathways for them.

"What kind of development would it be if we cannot change the fortunes of 6.9 lakh students? That is unacceptable," he said.

The government would explore technical and vocational training, foreign-language courses and possible

SEE PAGE 9 COL 4

'Never asked the student to remove veil or leave class'

Says DU teacher over allegations of making such remarks

DU CORRESPONDENT

Tasneem Siraj Mahboob, an associate professor at Dhaka University's English Department, yesterday said her remarks about a female student's face covering were misrepresented and taken out of context.

She was relieved of teaching duties on October 8 over allegations of making inappropriate comments about the student's clothing.

Tasneem also urged the university authorities to provide a full explanation of the allegations against her.

In a statement to the media, she said the incident took place during a master's final-semester class on October 7, when a student was sitting near the classroom door with two other female students, with her entire face, including her eyes, covered.

Tasneem said she could not immediately identify the student because her eyes were not visible. She said the student left the classroom after Tasneem told her that she felt uncomfortable because she could not see her eyes.

Tasneem said there had been no argument between them, although she later exchanged views with another student who spoke on behalf of the first student.

SEE PAGE 9 COL 1



A DECADE OF NAZRUL'S MELODIES

Artistes and guests pose for a photograph at "Ek Doshoker Surjatra", a musical evening celebrating the 10th anniversary of Gems of Nazrul, at The Daily Star Centre in Dhaka yesterday. The programme marked a decade of the organisation's efforts to preserve, promote and popularise the musical legacy of National Poet Kazi Nazrul Islam, while introducing his diverse works to younger generations.

PHOTO: MEHEDI HASAN

Abul Hashim's politics of inclusion still relevant

Say speakers at 32nd edition of Star Itihas Adda

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Abul Hashim's failed bid to establish a united Bengal should not overshadow his efforts to build an inclusive Bangalee identity and bring ordinary people into politics, speakers said at a discussion yesterday.

They said his vision of a pluralistic Bangalee identity and an inclusive society remained relevant, despite the failure of his aspirations for an autonomous Pakistan and a united Bengal.

They also said Hashim, a former Bengal Provincial Muslim League leader, believed Bangalee Muslims and Hindus shared an identity rooted in the language, culture, history and territory of Bengal.

He sought to unite people across religious lines and build a political order based on equality and social justice, they added.

The remarks came at the 32nd edition of The Daily Star Itihas Adda, titled "Abul Hashim's Politics and Philosophy", held at The Daily Star Centre.

Faruk Wasif, director general of Press Institute Bangladesh, described Hashim as a tragic figure whose political aspirations remained unrealised, although some elements of his vision later found expression in Bangladesh's emergence.

"The Pakistan he envisioned never came into being. The Lahore Resolution was not implemented as he understood it, nor did the united Bengal he sought materialise," he said.

Referring to Sucharita Sen's

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Participants at the 32nd edition of The Daily Star Itihas Adda, titled "Abul Hashim's Politics and Philosophy", held at The Daily Star Centre yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

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

Address teacher shortages urgently

Learning gaps among students in secondary schools are increasing

The impact of the persistent shortage of teachers at government secondary schools will be monumental unless it is addressed immediately. We wrote about the issue not long ago, and a recent report by this daily shows that the problem still persists, with no concrete solution in sight. It is mind-boggling how 2,842 teaching posts remain vacant in government secondary schools and 77,227 posts in non-government secondary schools under the Monthly Pay Order (MPO) programme. As a result, students are not learning enough while existing teachers are overworked. Consequently, the overall quality of education is deteriorating at a stage as crucial as secondary school. This will likely impact the academic and professional future of these young people adversely.

The data is truly shocking. Out of the 20,631 secondary schools, as many as 3,861 do not have ICT teachers, 2,744 have no mathematics teachers, and 2,625 are without English teachers. The lack of trained teachers in key subjects has been a persistent problem, leading to poor learning outcomes, an increase in dropout rates, and a rise in the number of students failing.

Delays in recruitment, problems in teacher deployment and difficulty in retaining teachers are the main factors behind the shortage. These are festering problems that have been allowed to accumulate. Unfortunately, successive governments have paid little heed to expert suggestions in addressing the crisis, resulting in predictable consequences.

During the interim government's tenure, a 10-member Improvement of Secondary Education Committee was formed, which provided 120 recommendations. It included a long-term proposal to make major changes in the recruitment and deployment process of secondary school teachers. It recommended, for instance, establishing a National Teaching Corps under which graduates would be recruited into the teaching service with competitive salaries, allowances, and professional status. In addition, they would have to serve for at least five years in government-assigned institutions, especially in schools in rural areas where acute teacher shortage is often a chronic issue.

The lack of trained teachers in key subjects has been a persistent problem and delays in recruitment, problems in teacher deployment, and difficulty in retaining teachers are the main factors behind the shortage. Unfortunately, successive governments have paid little heed to expert suggestions in addressing the crisis, resulting in predictable consequences.

Learning from other countries, especially within the region, to see how teachers are trained, paid, and incentivised to stay in the schools for which they were originally recruited, would be the right step. The present government has increased the education budget from 1.39 percent of the GDP to 2 percent, but it is still less than the four to six percent as recommended by Unesco. We urge the government to fully endorse the recommendations of the committee and implement them as soon as possible. Thousands of secondary students have already had to bear the brunt of a flawed education system and paid the price in terms of low-paying jobs and unemployment. Teachers help in building the intellectual backbone of a country. Yet teachers are some of the lowest-paid professionals. This must stop. Teachers must be given their due both financially and in terms of their status. Only then can we hope to get an adequate number of qualified teachers in all schools.

Is social media use getting out of hand?

Address the growing mental health risks of excessive use

Whenever we think of "doomscrolling"—defined as the compulsive habit of spending a huge amount of time viewing negative, distressing, or alarming content on social media—we usually blame ourselves for lacking the self-restraint to stop. While we do bear some personal responsibility for avoiding harmful habits, it would be naïve to let social media platforms off the hook entirely. These platforms invest considerable effort in keeping users hooked, employing research-backed mechanisms to increase engagement and time spent on social media. What may seem like a straightforward pursuit of profit maximisation has translated into serious consequences for users' mental health.

A Bangladesh-based study, conducted in 2024 involving 440 young adults aged 18 to 35 years, found that spending more than four hours a day on social media was associated with a higher likelihood of depression and anxiety. The findings point to a broader relationship between excessive social media use and mental health difficulties. These can, in turn, contribute to internet addiction, sleep problems, poor concentration, and irritability, among other challenges. Easy access to digital devices and a lack of digital literacy have exacerbated the problem, as parents often hand smartphones to very young children, without setting clear limits on screen time or monitoring the content they consume.

All this points to a grim reality for Bangladesh's overall mental health. The last national mental health survey, conducted in 2019, found that at least 18.7 percent of adults aged 18 years and above and 12.6 percent of children between the ages of 7 and 17 years had a mental disorder. The toll on young people is reflected, in part, in reports of student suicides, with at least 224 students dying by suicide up until September this year. There may also be links between deteriorating mental health and the reported rise in teen gang violence across the country. As per research in other countries, gang involvement has been associated with polytraumatisation—the experience of multiple traumatic events—which can have lasting adverse effects on mental health.

To address this crisis, our government must implement policies such as digital literacy programmes, accessible mental health services, and public awareness campaigns. Digital platforms must also be held accountable for design practices that encourage compulsive use. Young people need to grow up with healthier digital habits that promote their overall quality of life, rather than undermine it.

New NCT deal must deliver measurable gains for Bangladesh



Ahamedul Karim Chowdhury is former head of Kamalapur Inland Container Depot and Pangaon Inland Container Terminal, and an adjunct faculty member at Bangladesh Maritime University.

■ **AHAMEDUL KARIM CHOWDHURY**

The debate over the New Mooring Container Terminal (NCT) at Chattogram port has entered a new phase after Chittagong Port Authority (CPA) and UAE-based DP World signed a 15-year concession agreement on Thursday, October 8, for the operation, maintenance, and modernisation of NCT and its overflow container yard. Ownership of the terminal, land, and core infrastructure remains with the port authority, while Customs, Immigration, the Navy, Coast Guard, and other security functions remain under the control of the relevant state agencies.

Now that the deal has been signed, following a lengthy process marked by controversy and protests, the debate should move beyond the binary question of "foreign versus local." The more useful question for our trade and economy is: what measurable additional value will the concession produce, and how will that value be verified?

NCT is not a new facility being built from scratch. It is an established public asset that has been operating since 2007 and already handles around 44 percent of the port's container traffic. So, a concession involving such an asset cannot be judged by whether it maintains existing service levels; it must demonstrate additional gains in productivity, reliability, technology, service quality, and public revenue.

Some important parameters are already publicly known. According to Invest Bangladesh, DP World will pay an upfront fee of approximately Tk 600 crore and invest more than Tk 1,000 crore over the first 10 years in modernisation, equipment, and technology. CPA will also receive a revenue share and a fixed annual fee. The agreement establishes key performance indicators (KPIs) and requirements for regular reporting, CPA monitoring and audits, along with financial penalties for missed targets. These provisions make the concession's performance measurable, but they alone cannot guarantee whether it will ultimately deliver value for money. The real test lies in implementation.

To assess the results, the first priority should be to establish a performance baseline before the full operational handover. If vessel turnaround, berth productivity, crane moves per hour, truck turnaround, equipment availability, container dwell time, and yard utilisation are expected to improve, their starting levels should be documented. Otherwise, future gains may be difficult to distinguish from changes resulting from trade growth, new infrastructure, or wider port reforms.

As it is, Chattogram port's current performance leaves much room for improvement. It ranked 364th among 400 ports in the 2025 Container Port Performance Index, while container dwell time exceeds nine days and vessels spend more than 2.5 days in port. To turn these performance gaps into measurable improvements, any targets set must be specific, time-bound, and enforceable. Under the concession agreement, DP World's KPIs will include truck turnaround and crane productivity, with financial penalties applying if the company fails to meet agreed targets for three consecutive months. Such provisions will be meaningful only if performance is consistently monitored and the penalties enforced.



The real test of the NCT concession is whether it delivers measurable efficiency gains and a fair return from a public asset.

FILE PHOTO: **RAJIB RAIHAN**

The reported minimum annual container handling guarantee also needs to be put in perspective. The agreement reportedly sets a floor of 1.23 million TEUs (twenty-foot equivalent units), below the 1.385 million TEUs that NCT handled in FY2025-26. The guarantee is, therefore, better viewed as a contractual volume floor than as a productivity target. The more important test is whether the operator can improve crane productivity, vessel and truck turnaround, dwell time, and service reliability while handling future growth.

Investment commitments deserve the same scrutiny. The Tk 1,000-plus crore commitment should be broken down into measurable stages: what equipment will be purchased or replaced, which digital systems will be introduced, when investments will be made, and what improvements they are expected to deliver. DP World says its investments will cover civil works and equipment upgrades, digital solutions, and improvements in berth planning, yard management, equipment utilisation, preventive maintenance and safety.

Public accountability does not require the disclosure of every commercially sensitive clause. But users and citizens should understand the broad basis on which an established national asset is expected to generate public value over 15 years. It would, therefore, help to have a concise public concession summary disclosing the principal investment obligations, performance benchmarks, broad revenue-sharing principles, tariff governance, reporting requirements, review arrangements, default remedies, and handback conditions.

Terminal productivity is not the same as overall logistics productivity. Modern cranes, automated gates, and advanced terminal operating systems can improve NCT's performance, but a container that moves rapidly through the terminal and is then delayed by Customs clearance, banking documentation, regulatory approvals, or inland transportation remains part of an inefficient logistics chain. NCT's digital transformation should, therefore, integrate with Customs and Bangladesh's wider trade-facilitation systems. A digitally advanced terminal should not become an efficient island surrounded by paper-based processes. What matters to an exporter or importer is not merely how quickly a crane moves a container, but how predictably cargo moves from vessel to factory, or from factory to vessel.

Labour transition should also be part of the performance equation. The government says local employment will continue and that modern technology and international training will strengthen skills within the port and logistics sector. There remain some concerns among sections of workers, however, and these should be addressed through a structured workforce development programme covering retraining, safety, new technical skills, and opportunities for local professionals to take on increasingly sophisticated roles.

There is also an opportunity to make accountability visible. Since the agreement already provides for KPIs, regular reporting, CPA monitoring, and audits, CPA could publish a concise quarterly performance dashboard without disclosing commercially sensitive information. Indicators such as throughput, berth productivity, vessel and truck turnaround, dwell time, equipment availability, safety performance, and investment delivered would show whether promises are being translated into results.

Such transparency would benefit both sides. If DP World achieves substantial productivity gains, objective data will demonstrate the value of international operational expertise. If performance falls short of agreed commitments, the same system will allow CPA to intervene early.

Bangladesh has legitimate reasons to engage experienced global terminal operators. Technology, operational discipline, maintenance practices, and international standards can strengthen the competitiveness of the country's trade gateways. That said, the signing of the agreement itself should not be regarded as success. For exporters and importers, the desired outcomes are shorter logistics times, greater predictability, and more efficient cargo movement. For CPA and the state, what's expected is a fair and verifiable return from a public asset as well as the preservation of effective regulatory oversight.

So, the most constructive approach going forward would be to properly establish the baseline, measure contractual commitments, monitor investment and performance, enforce agreed standards, and report the results. If NCT becomes faster, more reliable, and technologically stronger while Bangladesh receives a fair return and CPA retains effective oversight, the concession will make its own case. If those improvements do not materialise, the country should be able to see that just as clearly.

Beware machines that always take our side



Monir Hossen is senior research associate at Centre for Advanced Research in Bangladesh.

■ **MONIR HOSSEN**

It is past midnight, and a university student in Dhaka is still turning over an argument with her roommate. She doesn't communicate with any of her human friends, perhaps fearing judgement or to avoid inconveniencing them. Instead, she types the whole story into a chatbot. Within seconds, it replies, warmly and at length: her feelings are completely valid, and the roommate sounds hard to live with. It feels good, and that is exactly the trouble.

Most public worry regarding artificial intelligence is about what it might do to us: take our jobs, flood the internet with lies, one day outthink us. Fair enough. But a smaller change is already underway, and it concerns how we deal with each other. More of our conversations now happen with a listener that never tires, never has a bad day, and rarely disagrees. Much of what we learn from other people comes from their willingness to disagree with us, and we are quietly losing the habit of hearing it.

In a study published in *Science* in March, Stanford researchers put personal dilemmas to 11 leading chatbots and found that the models backed the user's actions 49 percent more often than people did, even when the situation involved deception or illegality. When the prompts came from a Reddit forum where commenters had already judged the poster to be in the wrong, the bots still sided with the poster just over half the time. The researchers then tested real people. After a single exchange with a flattering chatbot, participants grew surer they were right and less willing to apologise or mend the quarrel. They also rated the flattering bots as more trustworthy.

Chatbots are refined using human feedback, and people tend to reward answers that agree with them. OpenAI came close to admitting as much in April 2025, when it withdrew a ChatGPT update that had turned strangely fawning. The company said it had leaned too heavily on short-term feedback and had no specific tests for flattery before release. Young people are the most exposed to such risks. A US survey published in *JAMA Pediatrics* in June found that nearly one in five people aged 12 to 21 had turned to chatbots for mental health help when they felt stressed, angry, or sad. Comparable Bangladeshi data is scarce, but the habit looks familiar. *The Daily Star* has reported on young people here using ChatGPT as a stand-in therapist, with a clinician warning about emotional dependence.

Abroad, the consequences have sometimes been grave. Families in the United States have sued chatbot companies after teenagers died. Character.AI and Google agreed in January to settle several such cases, while OpenAI is still fighting a case over the death of a 16-year-old and has argued in court that he misused the product. Courts will decide those claims, but what happens to a teenager's social skills when the easiest conversation in their life is also the only one that never pushes back?

When someone states something that is simply untrue, does the model nod along, and how often? How often does it praise weak work? Developers should publish those figures, and schools, parents, and regulators should be able to compare products on whether they tell the truth, not only on how clever they sound.

None of this is an argument against AI. A shy person can rehearse a difficult conversation. A student in a village with no private tutor can get patient help with algebra at any hour. But people should always be told when they are talking to a machine, in text, and on voice calls. The government's draft National AI Policy already acknowledges that chatbots have harmed people elsewhere and promises a risk framework.

We test AI systems for safety, so we can test them for weakness too. When someone states something that is simply untrue, does the model nod along, and how often? How often does it praise weak work? Developers should publish those figures, and schools, parents, and regulators should be able to compare products on whether they tell the truth, not only on how clever they sound. Builders can also reward a model for saying "I think you're mistaken", politely and meaning it.

We also need some time set aside for people alone. Schools could keep a few assignments and the lunch break free of screens. Offices can hold meetings where nobody consults a bot. Families can agree that a condolence message or an apology is written by the person who owes it. This is not technophobia. Talking to people is a skill, and skills fade when nobody uses them.

None of this is dramatic, and it isn't meant to be. How we treat one another is being shaped right now, in small late-night chats nobody is watching.

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Tea workers deserve a say in reforms to their industry



Philip Gain
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■ PHILIP GAIN

Imagine a woman buckling under the weight of a heavy basket of freshly plucked tea leaves. Her feet are wet and her back strained, her hands moving swiftly through the tender shoots. At the end of the day, she will have earned a wage that can scarcely sustain her family. Her home is a cramped dwelling in a tea garden's labour line, and the land it stands on does not belong to her. Her family has lived and worked on the same estate for generations, yet they remain excluded from its ownership, prosperity, and decision-making.

This is the human face of Bangladesh's tea industry, whose verdant landscapes conceal a deeply unequal socioeconomic order.

The government is moving ahead with an ambitious initiative to restructure the sector, confronted by rising production costs, mounting debt, declining productivity, and weakening export earnings. A task force formed in July 2026 proposed 59 recommendations, including recognising tea as an agricultural commodity, reducing VAT, restructuring loans, modernising factories, and establishing a Tk 2,050-crore assistance fund. A high-powered monitoring and advisory committee, chaired by the commerce minister, was subsequently constituted to oversee the process.

These measures seem necessary as the tea industry is in serious trouble, and doing nothing is not an option. But a fundamental question remains: who is this restructuring ultimately meant to serve? If the answer is only garden owners, financial institutions, and the industry itself, Bangladesh risks rescuing an industry while overlooking the very people whose labour has sustained it for generations.

An industry in distress, a workforce in despair

The recent protests that lasted for over a month between July and August this year over a daily wage increase to Tk 500, alongside union elections and formal land rights, have again brought this issue to the fore.

Earlier, in 2024, more than 12,000 workers in 12 gardens of the state-controlled National Tea Company (NTC) endured weeks of uncertainty over their wages. In Fultala Tea Garden, around 1,600 workers reportedly went without wages for 12 weeks. Imam and Bawani estates in Habiganj also had experienced prolonged management crises since 2023. Across the industry, 79 gardens were reported to be in distress, with provident fund contributions unpaid, utility connections severed, and factories unable to operate normally.

The response of NTC, in which the state holds 51 percent of the shares, illustrates how political interference, weak management, and financial indiscipline can cripple an enterprise. Yet the problem is not confined to state-controlled gardens. Private estates, too, have suffered from mismanagement, corruption, and financial irregularities over the years.

The owners could conveniently attribute the industry's difficulties solely to falling tea prices and rising production costs. These are genuine concerns, but they do not explain why some gardens perform well while others remain chronically unproductive.

Ispahani's Zareen Tea Estate in Moulvibazar, for instance, provides an instructive contrast here. Its reported production per acre is nearly twice the national average, while workers enjoy comparatively better housing and working conditions. The lesson is clear: productivity and workers' welfare need not be opposing objectives. Good management can advance both.

The people missing from the reform table

The task force and the subsequently formed high-powered committee bring together senior government officials, financial authorities, and tea industry representatives. But, troublingly, tea workers and their trade union have no representation in the process.

According to the task force's figures, approximately 1,02,000 permanent and 40,000 temporary workers are employed in the sector. Their labour is indispensable to tea production, yet their voices are absent from decisions that may fundamentally alter their livelihoods, employment relations, and future. Tea garden workers are not passive beneficiaries of industrial policy. They are participants in production and holders of labour rights, and are thus entitled to a say in decisions affecting their lives.



The verdant landscapes of Bangladesh's tea industry often conceal a deeply unequal socioeconomic order. FILE PHOTO: SHEIKH NASIR

Bangladesh's constitution guarantees freedom of association, while labour law provides for worker representation, participation committees, and collective bargaining. Yet, tea gardens have long failed to implement these provisions meaningfully. Workers' absence from the current restructuring process is therefore not an isolated oversight, but part of a deeper, long-held pattern of their systematic exclusion.

Bangladesh's constitution guarantees freedom of association, while labour law provides for worker representation, participation committees, and collective bargaining. Yet, tea gardens have long failed to implement these provisions meaningfully. Workers' absence from the current restructuring process is therefore not an isolated oversight, but part of a deeper, long-held pattern of their systematic exclusion.

A government committed to reform should correct this imbalance, not bolster it. In its first meeting on September 20, the advisory committee emphasised the need to restore the tea industry's long-term economic strength and reduce its dependence on government support, loans, and incentives. Participants stressed improving estate management, financial sustainability, and regular contributions through taxes and VAT, while protecting workers and the local economy. However, in any discussion exploring additional income from "unused" estate land through solar power, agriculture, forestry and cluster initiatives, the tea workers and their representatives must be consulted.

The unfinished business of colonial exploitation

Bangladesh's tea industry was established under British colonial rule, bringing labourers from across the subcontinent. Their descendants, from diverse ethnic and linguistic minority communities, still live in tea gardens. Though colonial rule ended, its social and economic legacies remain entrenched.

Of the approximately 1,40,000 tea workers, around 95 percent are non-Bangalee. They have their own languages, cultures and histories, yet remain among the country's most disadvantaged communities. Generations of labour have not secured them ownership of the land they cultivate or the homes in which they live. Their economic dependence on the gardens is almost absolute.

This is why tea workers' poverty cannot be understood simply as a consequence of low wages. It is rooted in a system of dependency that limits their mobility, bargaining power and ability to claim rights.

The daily cash wage of Tk 196, raised from Tk 187, remains an emblem of this injustice. Tea workers also face unequal provisions for casual and earned leave, lack appointment letters, and are deprived of gratuity. Despite legal provisions concerning workers' participation in company profits, they have not received the benefits to which they should have been entitled.

In many tea gardens, basic workplace facilities—including toilets, washing facilities, shaded eating areas, and safe drinking water—remain inadequate. Housing conditions are frequently found to be poor, despite provisions requiring employers to provide and maintain workers' accommodation. These are not privileges to be granted when an industry becomes profitable; they are obligations that must be fulfilled regardless of the financial condition of an enterprise.

Economic recovery must go hand in hand with workers' rights

Recognising tea as an agricultural commodity could help gardens access cheaper credit and other financial benefits. There is an economic rationale: tea cultivation involves agricultural activities, while processing harvested leaves is industrial. Bangladesh Bank itself describes tea as an agro-based or agro-industrial sector. However, reclassification must not weaken workers' status as industrial workers under the Bangladesh Labour Act, 2006, and the Tea Act, 2016, or undermine their rights to organise and bargain collectively. There should be enforceable commitments to wages, housing, safety, social security and legal protections. Justice is not replaceable in the pursuit of competitiveness.

The immediate priority is to establish a common understanding among the state, employers and workers on the future of the industry. Tea workers and their representatives must participate meaningfully in restructuring; labour laws must be enforced; and a just wage structure must be established through credible consultation. Housing, land access, provident fund, gratuity, healthcare, education, and social security must become integral to reform. Tea gardens must demonstrate sound management and commitment to workers' welfare before receiving government support.

Ultimately, restructuring cannot be measured solely by production, profitability, exports, or company balance sheets. Its true measure is whether a woman worker, for example, can feed her family, live in a decent home, educate her children, retire without fear, and claim her rights without intimidation.

Tea is more than a commodity in Bangladesh; it embodies generations of labour, history, and sacrifice. Rebuilding the tea industry while leaving its workers trapped in poverty would only preserve its oldest injustice under the banner of modernisation. We need more than a profitable industry; we need one where workers share in the prosperity they create and enjoy dignity, security, and a meaningful voice in decisions that affect their lives.

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INTERNATIONAL DAY OF THE GIRL CHILD

Valuing daughters means sharing the responsibility of care



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■ M NIAZ ASADULLAH

When Zunaira came into my life in 2014, and Nora the following year, I began to think differently about a question I had often encountered as a feminist economist: what does it mean to value a daughter? Becoming the father to two girls changed what I noticed about the lives ahead of them. More recently, caring for my mother has changed what I understand about the work of care itself.

The idea that daughters change their fathers is more than a sentimental claim. A 2008 study suggested that fathers of daughters become more sympathetic to some policies affecting women. In terms of whether raising daughters makes fathers more left-wing, subsequent evidence has been mixed, and political affiliation is a crude measure of what happens inside a family. But the narrower idea resonates with me: daughters can make their fathers notice barriers they might otherwise have treated as someone else's problem.

When my daughters were small and we lived in Kuala Lumpur, I did not know what careers or relationships they would choose. I did know that I wanted their choices and options to extend beyond the bounds of the roles others might expect them to fill. As an economist, I had written about gender and family decisions. As their father, I began to hear familiar claims about the "value" of daughters differently. But value to whom? Would their education expand their freedom, or simply make them better equipped to carry obligations that families had always assigned to women?



'The idea that daughters change their fathers is more than a sentimental claim.' PHOTO: CANVA

One such claim concerns care in old age. Across much of Asia, sons have traditionally been valued as a source of security for parents. Yet, support is not exhausted by money sent home or a call from overseas. The quality of a relationship, the possibility of sharing a meal, and the presence of someone who notices health changes can also shape an older person's quality of life.

My colleagues at Chulalongkorn University in Thailand and I explored this question in a study of older people in Thailand, published in 2023 in the Journal of Happiness Studies. Using nationally representative survey data, we found that living with an adult child was associated with greater happiness than living alone. For older women, the association was particularly evident when that child was a daughter. A good relationship with a daughter living in the same household was associated with greater happiness for both mothers and fathers; for mothers, a co-resident daughter's university education also mattered. Living with daughters was linked to less loneliness and, in some cases, better reported health and economic circumstances.

It would be a mistake to turn these findings into validation for assigning a duty to girls. This is evidence of association in Thailand; it cannot tell us that the daughter's presence caused her parent's happiness, or what the arrangement cost her. We did not measure whether she had chosen to live there, whether her own life was flourishing, or what kind of support she herself could count on. A parent's gain should never be presumed to come without effort from the child who helps make it possible.

The prevailing culture in Bangladesh adds its own pressures. Girls' schooling and professional aspirations have widened possibilities, even as many women still face obstacles to paid work. Migration can carry sons and daughters far from parents; smaller families may have fewer people to depend on during a prolonged illness. The expectation that an educated daughter will build a career, care for her children, remain available to ageing parents, and meet the needs of her marital household can place incompatible demands on one person. Celebrating her capacity for care without attending to those demands would be pointless and unfair.

For me, the concept of care became less abstract after my widowed mother suffered a serious spinal injury. I returned to Bangladesh and assumed the day-to-day responsibilities for her rehabilitation. Physical therapy at the hospital, exercises at home, appointments, medicines, and the constant practical decisions surrounding my mother's limited mobility became part of our lives. After many months of effort, she regained some mobility, although she still needs substantial assistance.

The decision to care for my mother dedicatedly changed the course of my professional and personal life. I do not recount the experience to present myself as exceptional. But it did teach me how inadequate the word "support" can be to describe the care work which must be repeated every day.

I am a son, and the person who was able to be there. What my mother needed was sustained care; the gender of the person providing it did not matter. My experience also made me more appreciative of caregivers whose contributions have long been taken for granted, particularly women balancing paid work and unpaid care responsibilities. Care needs time, skills, money, and reliable help. Affection is one part of it, but it is not enough to, say, arrange a therapy visit or make an inaccessible home safe.

What might children learn when a parent responds to an older generation's needs? They may come to see that love can be expressed through patient, practical action, and that men as well as women can undertake care work. The example we set matters more than the roles we prescribe. No daughter should be asked to prove her worth by surrendering her independence. No son should be treated as though earning money fulfils the whole of his responsibility to an ageing parent.

Families should not try to meet every care need by redistributing duties among children. Older people need accessible rehabilitation and dependable services. Caregivers need flexible work, trustworthy assistance, and time to sustain their own health and relationships. These forms of support are especially important for households unable to purchase private care services. As Bangladeshis live longer, care must become a public concern alongside a family one.

Becoming a father to two daughters changed the questions I asked about gender and family. Caring for my mother later on taught me how much a family's promises depend on being able to be present. We must learn to value girls for the lives they choose and to build a society in which care is possible for everyone who needs it and shared among everyone able to provide it.

BLENDER'S CHOICE–THE DAILY STAR OTT & DIGITAL CONTENT AWARDS 2025

Three wins later, Vicky Zahed says he's only getting started

RAKSHANDA RAHMAN MISHA

For Vicky Zahed, the greatest reward lies in winning hearts, but a third Best Director trophy certainly makes the journey sweeter. At the ***Blender's Choice–The Daily Star OTT & Digital Content Awards 2025***, Zahed took home the honour for his web series ***AKA***, adding another milestone to his growing list of accolades.

Having previously won for ***Redrum*** in 2022 and ***Chokro*** in 2024, the director continues to strike a chord with audiences through his psychological dramas that delve into the complexities of the human mind.

"Winning for the third time makes the occasion especially meaningful because the awards have only been around for five years. Having three wins in that short period feels very special," he said.

The win also reinforced his realisation that audiences continue to expect more from him.

"I thought that after winning three awards, I might feel like signing off, assuming there was nothing more to achieve. But that feeling disappeared after the win because I realised how much people still expect from me," he said.

For the director, that trust is far more valuable than industry recognition alone. While winning an award is gratifying, he believes audience appreciation remains the truest measure of his work.

"I've never felt that I absolutely had to win an award. Of course, winning feels good. Why wouldn't it? Everyone likes receiving an award. But if I don't win, I have no regrets," he said. "However, the day I stop receiving appreciation from the audience, I would feel that something had gone seriously wrong."

With ***AKA***, the director turned his attention to the underdog, drawing on a familiar cinematic tradition of marginalised characters who eventually rebel against their circumstances. The character draws inspiration from films such as Martin Scorsese's ***Taxi Driver*** and ***Joker***, alongside English and Bangladeshi mainstream cinema.



PHOTO: COLLECTED

Rather than borrowing from a single source, Zahed describes ***AKA*** as a blend of different cinematic influences, shaped by the stories and characters that have stayed with him over the years.

"Whatever a director watches or reads influences them. That's simply how creativity works," he said.

His childhood experiences with television programmes and films, he explained, continue to inform his creative instincts. The emotions and images that left a lasting impression on him eventually find their way into his own storytelling, allowing him to pass those feelings on to audiences.

Among the most challenging sequences in ***AKA*** was the brutal murder of a pregnant woman who is innocent of the crime her killer believes she has committed. The scene was particularly difficult to shoot because of her innocence and the tender moments established between her and her husband earlier in the story.

Zahed also singled out the project's first intentional murder as one of his favorite sequences. As the character struggles to take a life for the first time, the haunting use of ***Beche Thakar Gaan creates*** a striking contrast between the song's message of survival and the violence unfolding on screen.

The performance, music, cinematography, and lighting came together to make the sequence especially memorable for the director.

The night became even more meaningful when Afran Nisho and Mehazabien Chowdhury won awards for his OTT projects ***AKA*** and ***Neel Shukh***. Celebrating alongside two performers, he deeply admires the recognition as a collective achievement.

"It feels wonderful because they are among the most celebrated artistes in our country, and they received these awards for work we did together,"

"It feels wonderful because they are among the most celebrated artistes in our country, and they received these awards for work we did together," he said.

For Vicky Zahed, however, the three wins are not a cue to slow down. If anything, the audience's affection has strengthened his resolve to create better work. The challenge now is to live up to the expectations of viewers who continue to place their trust in him.

Kushum Shikder makes musical comeback with 'Probol Ghor'

Singer and actress Kushum Shikder has released a new original song, ***Probol Ghor***, marking her return to original music after nine years.

Kushum has written the lyrics, while Mahmud Sunny has composed and arranged the music. The song was recorded in 2020 during the Covid-19 pandemic. However, it was not released at the time. The track has now been released with a music video.



Kushum last released an original song, ***Nesha***, in 2017. She said the response to that song encouraged her to release new music.

Directed by Nakul Sharker, the music video was filmed at several scenic locations in Cox's Bazar. It is available on Kushum Shikder's Facebook page and YouTube.

EVENTS

'Reimagining Waste'



Goethe-Institut Bangladesh is hosting ***Reimagining Waste***, an exhibition featuring creative works by PASCH students and five selected artists exploring the possibilities of discarded materials. Following a month of workshops and experiments, the students, mentored by Urukku Bangladesh, will showcase their ideas alongside the artists, encouraging visitors to rethink waste, consumption and their relationship with the environment. The exhibition invites audiences to look at discarded materials from a fresh perspective and consider how waste can be reimagined through art and creativity.

Date: Saturday | October 17–23
Time: 3:00 pm onwards (opening)
Venue: Goethe-Institut Bangladesh

NEWS

AI-driven review

FROM PAGE 14

marks, even though most of them do not deserve such high scores.

To move away from this, the ministry drew up the proposal to make the post-mass uprising civil bureaucracy more dynamic, accountable, efficient, and transparent, said several officials involved in the process.

Policymakers at the public administration ministry believe that if the new assessment model is introduced, it will promote "meritocracy" in the civil bureaucracy in line with the ruling BNP's electoral pledge.

"Work is underway to carry out necessary administrative reforms in line with our electoral pledge, and the initiative regarding a digital ACR is part of that effort," Bari told this correspondent recently.

The proposal does not explain how AI will be integrated into the government's digital civil service platform, the Government Employee Management System (GEMS). It also does not say whether any AI tools will be developed internally or purchased from a private entity for the integration.

GEMS is a centralised digital platform of the ministry, which stores and manages all human resource management data, including personal data sheets (PDS) of civil servants, and information on their leave, promotions, transfers, and online evaluations.

The proposal mentioned that the introduction of the peer review system will reduce reliance on intelligence reports about officers being evaluated.

It also noted that Pakistan significantly curtailed corruption in its revenue sector and boosted revenue by rolling out a peer review system.

HOW WILL IT WORK?

Under the proposed mechanism, an officer will be evaluated by 30 to 45 colleagues -- both superiors and subordinates from former and current offices -- on five key criteria: integrity, official conduct, leadership capacity, political bias and competence.

The evaluators will answer at least 23 questions across the five criteria.

An officer's integrity will be evaluated first, determining whether the officer is involved in corruption or displays a tendency to please superiors and others.

There will be an assessment of professional conduct towards superiors, peers and subordinates across current and previous workplaces.

Besides, leadership capacity will be gauged by evaluating the officer's ability to make swift decisions, outspokenness, courage and crisis-resolution skills.

Information will be gathered on whether the officer has campaigned for or against any political party or wielded political influence.

Lastly, professional competence will be assessed by examining the officer's capacity to make prompt decisions; commitment to simplifying public services; and whether he or she frequently changes decisions.

The evaluations will not involve any human intervention or manual handling. The GEMS module will randomly select 30 to 45 peers or evaluators for each officer every year, using algorithmic logic.

The identity of the evaluators and their feedback will remain strictly confidential and anonymous.

Links will be sent to the designated evaluators to submit feedback. AI will then process and analyse their feedback alongside digital ACR data. Based on the analysis, decisions regarding promotions, postings and training will be made.

The system's automated algorithm will identify unusually positive or negative reviews submitted out of personal bias or grudges, said officials of the ministry's Career Planning Wing.

This correspondent spoke to at least seven officers with ranks ranging from deputy secretary to additional secretary across three ministries. Almost all of them supported the initiative but expressed doubts about its implementation.

A deputy secretary at the LGRD ministry said inefficient officers have always wielded considerable influence in the administration, regardless of which party was in power. They are likely to resist the introduction of the new system, as the proposed peer-review mechanism could undermine their dominance.

Citing an example, an officer at the public administration ministry said that more than a decade ago, the then Awami League government moved to implement a new career development mechanism to streamline promotions and postings. However, the initiative could not be implemented due to opposition from a section of influential officials.

Implementation of such initiatives would reduce politicisation in the administration, which is why inefficient officials and those who benefit from the existing system would never want that to happen, the officer added.

Welcoming the government's move, public administration expert and writer Feroz Mia said, "Fundamental changes can be brought to the administration through the introduction of a peer review system, which will help the government select efficient officers [for promotions and postings]."

However, mere digitisation of the existing system will not bring much benefit, he added.

Israeli strikes kill 5 more in Gaza

REUTERS, *Cairo*

Israeli strikes killed at least five Palestinians in the Gaza Strip in two separate attacks yesterday, health officials said.

Medics said an Israeli strike killed four people near Panda Mall in Gaza City, while another killed one person in the Tuffah neighbourhood further south of the city.

Israel has stepped up strikes against the Palestinian territory in recent weeks, saying Hamas has been rearming and carrying out attacks in violation of the ceasefire. Hamas denies rebuilding its arsenal or planning attacks and accuses Israel of undermining a US-brokered ceasefire agreed a year ago.

Considering Makkah pact

FROM PAGE 2

partnership, he said bilateral relations should expand beyond their traditional focus on labour migration and remittances.

"While that foundation remains important, it cannot be the ceiling of our ambition."

Saudi Arabia's Vision 2030 and Bangladesh's economic transformation have created common interests in investment, human capital, technology and connectivity.

Discussions are underway on a possible investment fund to facilitate joint investments and partnerships in priority sectors, he said, while citing renewable energy, infrastructure, ports, logistics, agriculture, fisheries, food security, healthcare, pharmaceuticals, information technology and AI as promising areas for Saudi investment.

"The days of dependency are over -- we are now placing emphasis on an equal partnership and on sustainable practices."

Humaiun stressed the need to shift towards trained and certified professionals to meet the changing demands of Saudi Arabia's labour market.

He called for stronger cooperation among training institutions, universities and industries to ensure skills certification aligned with Saudi market requirements.

The welfare, dignity and rights of Bangladeshi workers in Saudi Arabia would remain a government priority, he said.

CNG driver confesses to rape, murder

FROM PAGE 14

her head into the mud with his foot to ensure she was dead.

According to police, Tazmin hired Sumon's auto-rickshaw from Paduar Bazar to Racecourse for Tk 300 around 12:30am on Thursday.

Sumon allegedly told her he would take a shorter route to her home. Instead, he drove along several roads before reaching the crime scene, Pankaj said.

When Sumon stopped the vehicle, Tazmin became frightened and tried to flee. As he attempted to restrain her, she screamed. He then allegedly strangled her with a gamcha.

After she grew weak, he raped her and pressed her head into the mud with his foot, the police official added.

Sumon then took an iPhone from Tazmin's bag inside the auto-rickshaw and fled. He later hid the phone beside a pond near Kachikata Mosque in Chapapur before fleeing to Chattogram, police said.

Police recovered Tazmin's body from a paddy field beside the Cumilla-Noakhali regional highway in the Jagatpur (Manumura) area of Perul Uttar union under Lalmai Police Station after receiving a call through the national emergency service 999.

Her father, Abdul Alim, identified the body after checking the live location Tazmin had shared at 2:52am. A Lalmai police team was already at the scene.

Abdul Alim told this correspondent that Tazmin left home on October 4, saying she was going to visit a female friend. She later travelled to Cox's Bazar with the friend before leaving for Cumilla on Wednesday night.

Outcry as Trump agrees

FROM PAGE 14

most damage on Trump and the Republicans as November's midterm elections approach.

Diesel is the main supply chain fuel, and a rise in its costs feeds into consumer prices and also hurts US farmers, who need it to operate machinery.

Democrats said the agreement undercut a law Trump signed last month allowing for a broad range of sanctions on Russian banks, officials and tankers, as well as directing him to impose steep tariffs on the top five importers of oil or natural gas from Russia. The law gave Trump wide discretion to make exceptions to its provisions.

Some Republicans also criticised the agreement.

"Propping up Putin's war economy is morally wrong as he uses that money to bomb cities," Congressman Don Bacon, a Nebraska Republican, wrote on X. "The President's policies towards Russia and Ukraine are failures. We need moral clarity not moral ambiguity."

The development comes weeks after Trump signed into law the Lindsey Graham Sanctioning Russia and Iran Act, which gives him the power to impose tariffs up to 100% on countries like India and China that purchase Russian oil and gas.

JS body questions

FROM PAGE 14

by next February, but ministry data showed only 60MW had been added over the preceding 30 days, said Hasnat Abdullah, another committee member.

At that rate, he said, the target would be missed by a wide margin.

The committee has sought monthly progress reports and details of letters of credit opened for importing solar panels and inverters.

Under the incentive scheme, customers installing rooftop solar systems by February 28, 2027, will receive Tk 10.50 per unit for surplus electricity supplied to the grid until February 28, 2030, the meeting was told.

Hasnat said a 50MW rooftop solar project would ordinarily cost around Tk 150 crore, but the ministry had proposed spending more than Tk 350 crore.

The ministry has been asked to provide a cost breakdown for each project.

It also sought the planned generation mix for 2030, including projected demand and the shares of gas, coal, solar and nuclear power, and a timeline for shutting down idle oil-fired plants.

Hasnat called for a forensic audit of the Tk 2.89 lakh crore paid in capacity charges, saying only about 14,125MW of the 29,000MW installed capacity is being generated.

"We must pay capacity charges based on actual generation capacity," he said.

Nazibur said the ministry's presentation acknowledged mismanagement, corruption, and lack of planning, but did not report progress on an earlier investigation committee's recommendations.

The ministry was asked to explain the probe's findings and the steps taken after a High Court ruling on capacity charges.

The committee also sought measures to raise diesel reserves, which Hasnat said stood at only 31 days' supply, warning that disruptions could hit agriculture, transport and the rural economy.

Hasnat also criticised LPG market monitoring, saying consumers were paying Tk 2,500 to Tk 2,600 for a cylinder against a government-set price of around Tk 1,800.

Nazibur said the regulations needed for public hearings on energy prices had not been made effective in 23 years. The ministry said a draft had been prepared, but the committee did not get a satisfactory explanation for why it had not been approved, he added.

Lawmakers also stressed the need to speed up domestic gas exploration to reduce dependence on imported gas.

Committee Chairman Mia Nuruddin Ahmed Apu presided over the meeting, attended by Power, Energy and Mineral Resources Minister Iqbal Hasan Mahmud and State Minister Anindya Islam Amit.

Youth beaten to death over theft allegation

FROM PAGE 14

learned yesterday that an ambulance had brought Ripon's body to his home.

"As there were no documents accompanying the body, we took it back to Chanpara. There, we learned that Ripon had allegedly been beaten on suspicion of stealing a welding machine from a shop next to the brick kiln. Tk 20,000 had also been demanded," he said.

Robiul alleged that welding shop owner Rezaul Karim and Abu Talha Selim, the son of a former chairman in the area, led the beating.

"Ripon was found dead that evening inside the brick kiln garage where he stayed.

"We could not find Rezaul or Selim when we went there. Ripon had dark, swollen marks on his hands and back, apparently from beatings. Police also visited the scene," he added.

Siyam Ahmed, the ambulance driver who transported the body, said Selim had called for an ambulance around 9:00pm yesterday.

"When we reached Chanpara, they loaded the body into the ambulance and told me to take it to Ripon's home. But his family refused to accept the body. After waiting three hours, we returned to Chanpara with it. Police later told us to take it to the hospital at 3:30pm today," he said.

Contacted, Ibrahim Ali, officer-in-charge of Bogura Sadar Police Station, said, "We conducted an inquest and sent the body to Bogura Shaheed Ziaur Rahman Medical College Hospital for an autopsy. The cause of death will be known after the autopsy."

Asked whether anyone had been detained, the OC said, "We have not received a written complaint yet. Legal action will be taken against those involved once a complaint is filed."

Govt, EIB plan €250m women's health initiative

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh and the European Investment Bank (EIB) plan to invest €250 million in women's health and strengthen the country's healthcare system under a proposed initiative expected to benefit around 47 million women and girls between 2027 and 2031.

The proposed Women's Health Initiative will use funds from an existing EIB sovereign loan approved in 2021 to support Bangladesh's Covid-19 immunisation programme, pandemic preparedness and health system resilience, according to a press release yesterday.

The programme aims to improve maternal and newborn care, as well as cervical and breast cancer services.

It also seeks to strengthen primary healthcare, referral services, district hospitals and critical care to improve service quality and preparedness for future health emergencies.

"The health and well-being of women and girls are fundamental to Bangladesh's future," said Health Minister Sardar Md Sakhawat Hussain while announcing the initiative.

He said the partnership with the EIB and the UNFPA will help build a stronger and more equitable healthcare system.

EIB Vice-President Marek Mora said the initiative would combine long-term financing with technical expertise to improve people's lives.

UNFPA Executive Director Diene Keita said UNFPA is committed to bringing its expertise to this partnership so that the investment delivers measurable, equitable and lasting improvements in the health of millions of women and girls.

PRAYER TIMING
OCTOBER 11

	Fazr	Zohr	Asr	Maghrib	Esha
AZAN	4-40	12-45	4-15	5-45	7-15
JAMAAT	5-20	1-15	4-30	5-50	7-45

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION



Workers extract meat from snails at Bill Pabla village in Khulna yesterday. Traders bring the snails from different areas, and the meat is used as fish feed while the shells are crushed to make feed for poultry farms. Workers earn Tk 100 for processing each 60kg sack and can handle two to three sacks a day.

PHOTO: HABIBUR RAHMAN

Six months on, culvert work still unfinished

Thousands in Patiya suffer as vital road remains cut off

ARUN BIKASH DEY, *Chattogram*

Thousands of residents in several villages of Patiya have been suffering for months as construction of a new culvert on the Bhatikhine-Dhaur Denga rural road remains unfinished, leaving the road impassable to vehicles.

The old culvert was demolished six months ago, leaving a large crater that has since filled with rainwater.

About a month ago, local rickshaw pullers built a makeshift wooden bridge to allow rickshaws and bicycles to cross.

"We sat idle for a long time after the old culvert was demolished, but we have to feed our families," said rickshaw puller Mohammad Nabi.

Local resident Rajib Dey said people from Bhatikhine, Guatali, Alamdar Para, Dhaur Denga and Chanahara use the road daily.

"The delay has caused immense suffering. If an ambulance is needed for a critical patient, it has to take a detour of nearly four kilometres," he said.

Chanahara Union Parishad Chairman Abdur Rashid Doulati alleged that the contractor had abandoned the site despite repeated requests to resume work.

"I have spoken to the UNO several times to expedite the work, but nothing has happened," he said.

Patiya UNO Farhanur Rahman said the project was being implemented by the Upazila Project Implementation Officer's office and that he would take necessary measures.

Project Implementation Officer Mahbub Alam Shawon Bhuiyan said the 9.5-metre-long, 14-foot-wide box culvert was tendered in the 2024-25 fiscal year for Tk 32 lakh, with a June 30 completion deadline.



He said an extension had been sought from the ministry as flooding in June and July halted construction. Temporary dams required for the work could have obstructed drainage, he added.

Contractor Abed Ameri said he had completed four other culverts under the same tender and blamed flooding and rain for the delay.

"Once the rain stops, I will resume work and finish it within 15 to 20 days," he said.

You have not failed. We have failed

FROM PAGE 5

seed funding for students with business ideas. Three- to six-month technical and language courses, including Japanese, Korean and Chinese, could help students find jobs abroad, he said.

State Minister for Primary and Mass Education Bobby Hajjaj said the government would work on a "360-degree" teacher assessment system, incorporating feedback from headteachers, students and guardians alongside results.

"Whenever a student fails, I personally see it as a failure of the teacher," he said, acknowledging that teachers could face difficulties beyond their control.

Bobby also promised there would be no abrupt curriculum changes, saying revisions should follow research and consultation.

Zakia Sultana, a domestic worker, said her daughter had failed chemistry despite doing well in other subjects. With her husband ill, she feared financial hardship could prevent her daughter from studying nursing.

A participant from a tea worker's family said children in his community travelled six kilometres to school, while some families struggled to pay even a Tk 70 monthly fee.

An assistant headteacher from Nachole in Chapainawabganj said 13 students at his school had failed the SSC. Financial hardship kept some pupils away despite teachers visiting their homes, he said.

CAMPE Executive Director Rasheda K Choudhury, who chaired the programme, told the students: "You have not failed. We have failed as a society, as a nation."

Participants demanded supplementary examinations within three months, college admission for candidates who failed two subjects, free education up to class X and priority access to government skills training.

They also sought better teacher recruitment and assessment, improved school infrastructure, stronger monitoring and alternative subject options for students with intellectual disabilities.

Question leak derails exam

FROM PAGE 5

Another examinee, Naima Afroz, said most candidates had travelled from outside Dhaka. "We came here only to hear about the leak. We demand the exam be held within a day or two."

In a press release, the department acknowledged that question papers had been leaked on social media and said the preliminary exam had been tentatively rescheduled for 3:00pm on October 16.

Earlier, Md Mazharul Haque, assistant director of the department, said the exam was scheduled at 95 centres across Dhaka but was postponed due to "unavoidable reasons".

The protests left commuters stranded for hours.

Prabir Roy said it took him nearly an hour to reach Shahbagh from Dhanmondi by motorcycle.

Rubel Karim, a private service holder, said his journey from Dhanmondi to Farmgate took an hour and a half. "After being stuck in traffic for an hour, I decided to get off the rickshaw and walk."

Around 1:00pm, police were seen at Shahbagh and Manik Mia Avenue persuading protesters to move aside to ease congestion.

Md Masud, an operator at the Dhaka Metropolitan Police control room, said traffic began returning to normal around 1:00pm after disruptions since 11:00am.

Rafiqul Islam, deputy commissioner of the DMP's Tejgaon Traffic Division, said vehicular movement resumed after protesters left Manik Mia Avenue around 1:00pm.

Abul Hashim's politics

FROM PAGE 5

book "Theorizing a Bengali Nation: Abul Hashim and the United Bengal Movement, 1937-1947", Faruk said Hashim's concept of Bangalee nationhood continued to influence political aspirations after Partition.

Hashim viewed the Lahore Resolution as a framework for autonomous regions rather than a state based on a uniform religious identity. This distinguished him from both the Congress's vision of a unified Indian nation and Muhammad Ali Jinnah's two-nation theory, Faruk said.

Faruk credited Hashim -- who became general secretary of the Bengal Muslim League in 1943 -- with broadening the party's appeal beyond aristocratic elites by mobilising young people, rural peasants and educated Muslims around economic inequality.

However, conservative elites eventually captured the movement's political gains, leaving Hashim's reformist agenda unfulfilled, he said.

Drawing parallels with later political movements, including the July uprising, Faruk said resistance to entrenched power, rather than disputes over cultural symbols, lay at the heart of such movements.

Joining virtually, researcher and editor Ahmad Mazhar said Hashim's lasting contribution was bringing politics out of drawing rooms and aristocratic circles and closer to ordinary people.

He highlighted Hashim's emphasis on transparency in party organisation and financing, contrasting it with the lack of clarity surrounding political funding today.

Hashim's political work was closely linked to his intellectual pursuits. He studied Islam alongside economics, history and Marxist thought to relate religious ideas to modern social and political life, Mazhar said.

Describing Hashim as deeply non-communal, Mazhar said he sought to develop an inclusive vision rooted in Islamic principles that accommodated people of different faiths and cultures.

Recalling Hashim's defence of Rabindranath Tagore, Mazhar said he had criticised attempts to reject the poet in the name of Islam and Pakistani ideals in a statement in 1957.

Mazhar called for more research into Hashim's writings, speeches, and political decisions.

"I am not talking about going back. We need to learn from those failures to move forward," he said, referring to the failed United Bengal proposal.

Writer, researcher and linguist Muhammad Tanim Nowshad said Hashim did not fit conventional ideological categories.

"You cannot call him a traditional Marxist, nor was he a traditional Islamist," he said, noting that Hashim drew on different intellectual traditions to address the challenges of his time.

Tanim discussed Hashim's philosophy of "Rububiyyat", which he described as the gradual development of human beings towards fuller existence through material wellbeing, intellectual freedom, and spiritual growth.

Comparing this vision with Karl Marx's ideas on the development of human capacities, Tanim said Hashim saw religious thought and the struggle against exploitation as compatible.

Hashim's vision of a united Bengal did not involve imposing a rigid nationalism. Instead, it envisaged everyone retaining their distinct identities within a shared political and cultural space, he said.

The event was moderated by The Daily Star's Emran Mahfuz.

Never asked the student to remove

FROM PAGE 5

When the other student raised the issue of freedom of clothing choice, Tasneem said she explained the need for teachers to be able to identify students and maintain a comfortable teaching environment.

She denied forcing the student to answer any question or instructing her to change her clothes, remove her veil, or leave the classroom.

Tasneem also said she had neither punished the student for wearing religious clothing nor barred her from attending future classes. She stressed that her comments concerned the covering of the eyes, not the hijab, burqa, or purdah.

Tasneem said her remarks had been misrepresented and that their context and intent had not been accurately conveyed.

Meanwhile, the University Teachers' Network has described Tasneem as a victim of "political propaganda, misinformation and academic subjugation" and demanded a full investigation into the incident, along with an opportunity for her to defend herself.

The network, in a press release yesterday, said the decision to relieve Tasneem of her teaching duties was contrary to university rules.

The network further demanded punitive action against those who recorded the teacher's remarks without permission and circulated them online selectively or out of context in a way that it said spread misinformation.

The network said it also opposed any classroom behaviour or remarks that could cause students physical or psychological distress or make them feel humiliated, adding that this principle might have been breached in the present case.

দি ইনস্টিটিউট অব ব্যাংকার্স, বাংলাদেশ (আইবিবি)
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পুরানা পল্টন, ঢাকা-১০০০

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GD-2459

Toufique Imrose Khalidi laid to rest amid tributes

FROM PAGE 5

News Editor Zahidul Kabir read out a tribute by acting editor-in-chief Biswadip Das.

In his tribute, Biswadip said, "Khalidi taught us to ask difficult questions, not to bow our heads under pressure, and to bring the truth before the public, however uncomfortable it may be."

"It is our collective responsibility to carry forward the ideals he left behind and the work he began."

Brig Gen Mohammad Raisul Islam, assistant military secretary, laid a wreath on behalf of President Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir. Gokul Bimal Kala, first secretary (political, press and information) at the Indian High Commission, also paid tribute on behalf of the mission.

Local Government, Rural Development and Cooperatives Minister Abdul Moyeen Khan and The Daily Star Editor and Publisher Mahfuz Anam were among those who paid their respects.

Moyeen Khan said Khalidi had gone beyond reporting news, making significant contributions through his analysis of Bangladesh's social, political and economic realities.

Mahfuz Anam said Khalidi's achievements extended beyond journalism to building and running a media organisation founded on professional ethics and independence.

"Many of us have devoted our lives to journalism. But he built an institution like bdnews24.com and ran it as well," Anam said.

He described the values of journalistic independence and ethics established at bdnews24.com as one of Khalidi's outstanding contributions to the country's media landscape.

Khalidi's friend Justice Abu Taher Mohammad Saifur Rahman remembered him as an intelligent, talented and courageous voice.

Former Jatiya Press Club president Shawkat Mahmud said the generation of journalists Khalidi had nurtured would carry forward his ideals.

Others who paid their respects included The Daily Star Consulting Editor Kamal Ahmed; BRAC Executive Director Asif Saleh; Agamir Shomoy Editor Mostafa Mamun and Executive Editor Ehsanul Haque Babu; former BFUJ president Omar Faruque; columnists Chiranranjan Sarker and Salek Khokon; BBC journalist Kadir Kallol; actors Tariq Anam Khan and Nima Rahman; Professor Sadeka Halim; and human rights activist Dipayan Khisa.

Khalidi fell ill in London on October 1 and died the following day at St Bartholomew's Hospital from a brain haemorrhage. His janaza was held at Brick Lane Mosque in east London on October 8.

His body arrived in Dhaka on a Biman flight around 11:00am yesterday. The body was later taken to the bdnews24.com office and his residence before the janaza.

Khalidi had a 37-year journalism career, working at The Daily Star, The Financial Express and the BBC before becoming editor-in-chief and managing director of bdnews24.com in July 2006.



THREE YEARS AFTER 7 OCTOBER

When a date became an alibi for genocide

YOUSEF SY RAMADAN

Three years on, and the nightmare continues. The 7th of October 2023, a date, has been asked to do something no date can do. It has been used to explain, excuse and close debate about everything that came after. In Gaza, Palestinians have paid for that perverse logic with their lives, their homes and their future. The question since then has been what has been done in its name, and who has been left out of the story.

The numbers are hard to hold in the mind. According to Gaza's Ministry of Health, at least 74,016 Palestinians have been killed and 175,068 wounded since October 2023. Women and children make up around half of the dead, while 1,145 people have been killed since the ceasefire took effect in October 2025.

The harm goes beyond death. About 90 per cent of Gaza's people have been forced from their homes, many of them several times. The UN Environment Programme found that 78 per cent of Gaza's roughly 250,000 buildings have been damaged or destroyed. Hospitals, schools, bakeries, sewage and water systems and universities have been hit. In 2025, the global hunger monitor declared famine in parts of Gaza.

If one date can explain all of this, then we must ask what kind of explanation it is.

In the days after 7 October, Israeli leaders set out a new framework. The aim was no longer to respond to a specific threat but to dismantle an entire system of governance and, with it, much of Gaza's civilian life. Statements by officials described Palestinians in Gaza in dehumanising terms, including the phrase "human animals". A full siege was announced, cutting off all essentials, including food, fuel, water and electricity.

Collective punishment of a civilian population is prohibited under the Fourth Geneva Convention. So is starving civilians as a method of war. Yet Israel's policies treated these rules as obstacles to be explained away rather than limits to be respected.

The central tool was the language of self-defence. States do have a right to defend themselves, but that right has conditions. Force must be necessary, proportionate and directed at military targets. Civilians must be protected. And it is far from settled that a state can claim self-defence against territory it occupies and controls. In its 2024 advisory opinion on Israel's presence in the occupied Palestinian territory, the International Court of Justice found that presence unlawful and said it must end.

Still, "self-defence" became a phrase that closed conversations rather than opened them. Each strike, each evacuation order, each blocked aid convoy could be placed under it. In Western media, the more the word was repeated, the less anyone asked whether the conditions behind it were being met.

Three tools deserve attention because they shaped how the world understood events.

The first is the "human shield" argument. Israel describes civilian deaths as the fault of the other side. International law does not work this way. Even where soldiers operate near civilians, especially in densely populated areas like Gaza, the attacking side must still distinguish between military targets and civilians, and must weigh the harm to civilians against any expected gain.

Simply claiming that civilians were in the way does not remove the duty not to kill them en masse. Although



People bury unidentified bodies of Palestinians returned by Israel at a mass burial site, during a ceasefire between Israel and Hamas, in Deir al-Balah, central Gaza Strip, 22 October 2025. PHOTO: REUTERS

If 7 October is to be remembered honestly, it must be remembered as part of a longer story, and not as a licence to commit unimaginable atrocities against Palestinians.

Israeli occupation forces describe civilians as collateral damage while targeting "militants", the argument here is that civilians themselves have been deliberately targeted. The killing of six-year-old Hind Rajab, who sat defenceless in a car that was reportedly hit by at least 335 bullets, raises profound questions about how civilians, including children, have been treated during Israeli military operations.

The second is the evacuation order. Warning people to move south, then to move again, was presented as a measure to protect civilians. It pushed a population into shrinking areas with little shelter, food or medicine, and these areas were later struck as well. At times, civilians were also struck while they were in the process of evacuating. For Palestinians, who carry the memory of 1948, when hundreds of thousands were forced from their homes and never allowed back, the fear that displacement might become permanent evoked a history repeating itself.

The third is the label. When Israel describes civilians as "militants" or "associated with terror" after its occupation forces kill them, as has been alleged even in the cases of journalists and aid workers, the label creates a justification for their deaths. It turns a question of law into a question of identity.

International institutions have not been silent. They have been slow, and often blocked. In January 2024, the International Court of Justice found it plausible that some of the rights South Africa invoked under the Genocide Convention were at risk, and ordered Israel to take steps to prevent acts of genocide and to allow aid in. Israel strongly denies the accusation of genocide and says its operations target armed groups, not the Palestinian people. The substance of that case will take years. The written phase may not finish until 2029. Palestinians in Gaza cannot wait that long, and many will not live to see a ruling.

In November 2024, the International Criminal Court issued arrest warrants for Israel's prime minister and its former defence minister over allegations of war crimes and crimes against humanity. Israel rejects the court's jurisdiction. In September 2025, a UN Commission of Inquiry concluded that Israel had committed genocide in Gaza, a finding Israel once again rejected. A state facing some of the most serious legal accusations in the world has been able to continue its military operations without being held accountable, while some of its closest allies have shielded it from consequences, supplied it with weapons and, in some cases, attacked the courts themselves.

This matters beyond Gaza. International law is only as strong as the willingness to apply it equally. When rules are enforced against some and waived for others, they stop being law and become politics. People have noticed. That is why trust in the so-called rules-based order has fallen so sharply, especially across the Global South.

There is another way 7 October has been used. Israel has presented it as the beginning of history. Many news reports and political speeches begin the story on that morning, as if there were not decades of history that came before it. Beginning in 2023 removes more than seven decades of displacement, military occupation, the expansion of settlements that international law prohibits, and a blockade of Gaza that has strangled daily life since 2007. It also removes and belittles the experiences of the people who have lived through all of it since 1948.

When Palestinians are mentioned at all, they often appear as casualties, as numbers, or as a "humanitarian problem" to be managed. They are rarely described as a people with rights: the right to self-determination, the right to live safely in their homes, the right to return, and the right to be counted as individuals rather than as a threat.

Palestinians have also been told what their future should look like by people who are not Palestinian. Plans for Gaza's "day after" have been announced by outside powers with little say from those who live there. Proposals to move people out of Gaza, however they are dressed up, ignore a basic principle. A people cannot be rescued by being removed from their land.

And yet the story has not gone the way those who wrote the framework expected. Ordinary people across the world refused to accept that one date could justify all of this. Governments also began to move. South Africa took its case to the world's highest court. Several countries cut or reviewed ties with Israel, and more have recognised the State of Palestine. These steps came late and were not enough, but they show that the framework built around 7 October is not as solid as its authors hoped.

What drove this response was not hatred, as critics often claim. It was a simple moral instinct and an urgent need for justice.

If 7 October is to be remembered honestly, it must be remembered as part of a longer story, and not as a licence to commit unimaginable atrocities against Palestinians. A fair reckoning would include at least four things.

First, the law must apply equally. Courts must be allowed to do their work, and states must stop attacking or ignoring them when their findings are uncomfortable.

Second, Palestinians must be seen as a people with the right to self-determination. Any future plan for Gaza and the West Bank that excludes Palestinian voices will fail, morally and practically.

Third, the facts of what happened must be established independently. That means allowing open access for journalists, investigators and aid workers, so that the record is not written by one side alone.

Fourth, the root causes must be addressed. As long as the illegal occupation, attacks, blockade and displacement continue, there will be people who resist them.

Three years on, Palestinians are still digging their loved ones out of the rubble and sleeping in tents. They are still being killed even after the "ceasefire". They are not asking for special treatment. They are asking to be counted, protected and heard like everyone else.

Yousef SY Ramadan *is the Palestinian Ambassador to Bangladesh.*

NAVIGATING THE US-CHINA RIVALRY

Bangladesh cannot outsource its AI sovereignty

AYESHA TARIQ

On the morning of August 1, the United States (US) Special Envoy for South and Central Asia, Sergio Gor, met Prime Minister Tarique Rahman in Dhaka and suggested that Bangladesh join Pax Silica, the State Department's coalition for artificial intelligence (AI), semiconductor and critical mineral supply chains. Later that day, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs announced that Bangladesh would join the Shanghai-based World Artificial Intelligence Cooperation Organization (WAICO), initially as an observer. Dhaka faces a diplomatic balancing act, even if it has made few concrete commitments so far.

The two blocs offer different things. Pax Silica, launched in Washington in December 2025, began with seven signatories, including Japan, Singapore and the United Kingdom, and had grown to twenty-five by August, according to the Information Technology and Innovation Foundation. It is widely seen as an effort to reduce reliance on China. WAICO, founded in Shanghai on July 16 by twenty-nine countries, including Russia and Pakistan, presents itself as a development-focused and more inclusive alternative. Its pitch is aimed at developing countries that regard Western technology controls as a barrier.

Dhaka has reasons to maintain close ties with both. China supplied between 28% and 30% of Bangladesh's monthly imports in the last quarter of 2024, making it the country's largest source of imports. The US, for its part, is the largest single destination for Bangladeshi goods. Beyond Washington's existing ties with Dhaka, Gor saw considerable potential in information technology, and the two sides discussed American investment in warehousing and agriculture, as well as financing through the US International Development Finance Corporation. Those talks point to a partnership that is broadening beyond exports, much as China's role already extends across trade, industrial zones and river management, as demonstrated by the 13 memorandums signed during the Prime Minister's visit in June.

For now, Dhaka can maintain ties with both blocs because it has made no binding commitment to either. That could change once each bloc establishes rules governing which vendors and data it trusts. A country whose systems can operate under either set of rules can negotiate over the terms, while one tied to a single supplier must accept the conditions set by that supplier's bloc.



US Special Envoy for South and Central Asia Sergio Gor meets Prime Minister Tarique Rahman at the Prime Minister's Office in Dhaka on August 1, 2026. During the meeting, Gor proposed that Bangladesh join the US-led Pax Silica initiative, which focuses on artificial intelligence, semiconductors and critical mineral supply chains.

The draft National AI Policy for 2026 to 2030 shows what sovereignty requires. It promises a national computing strategy with phased upgrades to high-performance computing infrastructure at the National Data Centre, and it requires sensitive datasets, including health, biometric, financial and national security data, to be stored and processed in Bangladesh or in jurisdictions designated as trusted. The policy has yet to be approved by the current government, but its proposed guidelines are sound. However, we must remember that computing depends on electricity, and a national data centre will compete for a power supply that must already serve homes, industries and hospitals. The energy crisis we faced this year made it particularly apparent that we need better planning and a more reliable electricity supply. A facility that cannot rely on the grid cannot host a state's most sensitive systems, so the final policy should link the computing strategy to an agreed electricity plan.

The hardware question leads back to geopolitics. Bangladesh does not manufacture advanced chips, so every processor in a national data centre will have to be imported through supply chains that one bloc or the other controls. The policy's reference to 'trusted' jurisdictions raises the obvious question of who determines which jurisdictions can be trusted, and Washington and Beijing will answer it differently.

The Philippines offers a warning about moving too quickly. Its planned economic security zone at New Clark City, covering 4,000 acres, could require up to three gigawatts of electricity at full development, according to estimates by the agency in charge. The mayor of Capas in Tarlac province has said that the plan was not formally presented to his local government, the Daily Tribune reported. Joining a coalition does not eliminate the need for the power supply, local consent and legal groundwork that a project of that size requires.

In the AI era, strategic autonomy is as much a matter of system design as it is of diplomacy. A government that can move its workloads between cloud providers and replace one AI model with another without rebuilding its services keeps its options open. A government whose public services depend on a single company's technology has effectively chosen a side. The draft policy already recognises this, requiring public-sector AI systems to use open standards, interoperable data formats and portable models specifically to prevent vendor lock-in. The task now is to incorporate those requirements into every contract before the first large-scale systems are built, since retrofitting them later would cost far more.

The choice of AI model is where this matters most. Open-weight models, which can be downloaded, hosted domestically and adapted using Bangla-language data, offer one of the most practical routes to developing systems that the state can control. However, open models also have national affiliations. Meta's Llama and Alibaba's Qwen are both freely available, yet a ministry that standardises on either one ties its developers and their tools to an ecosystem anchored in either Washington or Beijing. Dhaka should test competing models against the same Bangla-language benchmarks and ensure that its systems remain capable of running more than one model. The choice of model should be treated as a procurement decision that can be reversed when a better or safer alternative becomes available.

The second test of sovereignty is people. AI capability cannot be bought once and for all, because models are regularly replaced and the threats they address continue to evolve. A ministry that relies on foreign advisers and vendors to operate its systems holds a service contract, while the knowledge remains with the supplier. Without that knowledge at home, Bangladesh risks becoming a low-cost site for other countries' systems, with the valuable design work and profits remaining abroad, regardless of which bloc supplies the technology.

Bangladesh should retain its observer status in WAICO and continue discussions about Pax Silica, while refraining from fully joining either until it can offer capabilities that its partners need.

These issues matter most in national security. AI has made it cheaper to conduct disinformation campaigns and harder to verify what is real, and security agencies are likely to be among the government's earliest and most demanding users of the technology. They are also among the most likely to purchase complete systems from abroad, even though dependence on a foreign supplier in this sector carries particularly high costs.

The measure of progress should be how quickly Bangladeshi officials take over the work, and the vendor certification framework proposed in the draft policy is the natural place to make this a requirement. Every significant AI contract should set deadlines by which local staff must take responsibility for operating the systems and making technical decisions, with suppliers' payments tied partly to the success of that handover. Bangladesh has around 700 chip designers and produces more than 20,000 computer science and electrical engineering graduates each year, providing a potential talent pool for developing domestic AI capabilities. The state's challenge is recruiting and retaining enough of them by offering salaries that can compete with those in the private sector.

Over the next two years, both blocs are likely to move from broad declarations to specific conditions, attaching rules governing vendors, data and computing access to their offers of investment and technology. Bangladesh should retain its observer status in WAICO and continue discussions about Pax Silica, while refraining from fully joining either until it can offer capabilities that its partners need. In the meantime, the final policy should ensure a reliable power supply for national computing facilities and establish a technically skilled cadre within the government capable of operating and evaluating AI systems, supported by enforceable portability requirements in every public-sector technology contract.

At the UN General Assembly on September 24, Prime Minister Tarique Rahman said Bangladesh did not want today's digital divide to become tomorrow's AI divide. Closing that gap will depend less on which bloc Dhaka eventually joins than on whether it develops systems it can operate, modify and manage on its own terms. A country with that capacity can work with Washington and Beijing simultaneously and negotiate with both, while a country without it will find that its suppliers have effectively made the choice on its behalf.

Ayesha Tariq, CFA, *is the CEO and co-founder of MacroVisor, an independent macro research firm.*





PRIME MINISTER
GOVERNMENT OF THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF BANGLADESH

PRIME MINISTER
GOVERNMENT OF THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF BANGLADESH

Message

I extend my warmest congratulations to the graduating class of the Islamic University of Technology (IUT) on its 38th Convocation. I also offer my heartfelt appreciation to the proud families of our graduates, as well as to the Vice-Chancellor, faculty, and staff whose dedication has made this milestone possible.

IUT holds profound personal and historic significance for me. In 1981, my late father, President Ziaur Rahman, laid its foundation stone then as the Islamic Centre for Technical and Vocational Training and Research to foster technical self-reliance and solidarity across the OIC member states. In 2001, my late mother, former Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia, carried that vision forward by elevating the institution to a full university as IUT. Both were guided by the firm conviction that a nation's strength resides in the skill, character, and discipline of its youth, a principle that continues to drive our vision today.

As artificial intelligence, automation, and rapid innovation reshape the global landscape, IUT serves as a vital anchor for our national growth. My government is committed to generating employment for 1 crore youth within five years, including nearly 10 lakh high-tech positions across AI, cybersecurity, and the broader digital economy. Institutions like IUT are essential to converting our demographic dividend into a world-class workforce.

To graduates, I consider your academic success to be a tool to serve humanity and to be led with integrity, humility, and compassion. I request that you should drive innovation not only to advance your careers, but to create opportunities for others and utilize your expertise to uplift your communities and contribute to the shared prosperity of the global Muslim Ummah.

My government remains steadfast in supporting IUT as an international center of academic excellence. I wish every graduate immense success in their future endeavors.

May Almighty Allah guide and bless you all.

Bangladesh Zindabad.

Tarique Rahman
Prime Minister
Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh



Secretary General
Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC)
Chancellor
Islamic University of Technology (IUT)

It is a matter of pride, privilege and immense pleasure to extend my heartiest congratulations to the graduating students, families, faculty, staff, and the entire IUT community on the occasion of the 38th Convocation of the Islamic University of Technology. The convocation reaffirms what the shared purpose of the OIC Member States can accomplish through knowledge, cooperation, and service.

A convocation is not merely the culmination of an academic journey; it is the beginning of a new phase filled with opportunities, responsibilities, and challenges. I encourage you to embrace the future with confidence and humility. Continue to learn, remain curious, respect diversity, and use your knowledge not only for personal success but also for the betterment of society. Let your achievements be measured not only by what you accomplish, but also by the positive difference you make in the lives of others.

IUT, which was established as an institution of learning with a vision for the progress of the Muslim world, has always endeavoured to produce graduates with educated minds, ethical leadership, and the ability to transform knowledge into solutions. Today, as our graduates step forward into the professional world, they carry with them not only knowledge and technical skills, but also the values, discipline, and spirit of excellence nurtured at IUT. You are graduating at a very critical and defining moment in the human history. Artificial intelligence is transforming and affecting every part of our lives including education, research, industry, healthcare, public administration, and the nature of work itself. Its promise is immense, but so are the responsibilities that accompany it. I urge you to approach AI not merely as users of powerful tools, but as thoughtful creators and ethical stewards who protect human dignity, fairness, privacy, security, and truth. Whether you pursue engineering, science, health innovation, entrepreneurship, education, or public service, let technology remain a means of serving people, never an end detached from them. I also encourage you to become connectors across the Ummah. Share knowledge, build research partnerships, mentor those who follow, and use digital platforms to bring institutions and communities closer together. Through responsible innovation and cooperation, you can help our Member States confront common challenges and create opportunities that no nation or university could achieve alone. Lead always with wisdom.

I extend my sincere gratitude to the Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh for its continued support that enables IUT to flourish as a shared institution of the Ummah. I also appreciate the Member States whose guidance and support strengthen IUT's mission and its aspiration to serve as a model university for our community. I commend the University leadership, faculty, and staff for advancing academic excellence, research, student wellbeing, diversity, and responsible digital innovation.
Congratulations on your remarkable achievement and best wishes for a bright and fulfilling future. May your careers be guided by purpose, excellence, integrity, and compassion.

Ismail Ould Cheikh Ahmed
Secretary General of the OIC
Chancellor of the Islamic University of Technology (IUT)



Hon'ble Minister
Ministry of Education
Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh

It is my great pleasure to extend my warmest congratulations to the graduating students of the Islamic University of Technology on the occasion of its 38th Convocation. I also congratulate their proud parents and families, as well as the Vice-Chancellor, faculty members, officers, and staff, whose dedication has made this occasion possible.

IUT holds a distinctive place among the institutions of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, bringing together students and scholars from across the Muslim Ummah to build technical capacity, foster solidarity, and advance shared prosperity. Bangladesh takes great pride in hosting this center of excellence in engineering, technology, and technical education.

The story of IUT is inseparable from the vision of Shaheed President Ziaur Rahman. In 1981, he laid the foundation stone of the Islamic Centre for Technical and Vocational Training and Research, driven by his belief in technical self-reliance and solidarity among OIC member states. That vision was carried forward by former Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia, who elevated the institution to full university status as the Islamic University of Technology in 2001. Their shared conviction was that a nation's true strength lies in the skill, discipline, and character of its youth. It is on this foundation of knowledge, self-reliance, and research that IUT stands today.

We are living in an age when artificial intelligence, automation, and rapid technological change are reshaping economies and the nature of work. In such times, a certificate alone is not enough. A nation that only uses technology developed elsewhere remains a follower; a nation that researches, questions, and innovates earns the right to lead. For this reason, the Ministry of Education regards research as the foundation of our future. We want our universities to be places where original ideas are born, tested, and transformed into solutions for real challenges in energy, health, agriculture, climate resilience, cybersecurity, and artificial intelligence.

The government has pledged to create employment opportunities for one crore of our youth over the next five years, including about ten lakh jobs in the ICT sector. Opportunities on this scale depend on a strong base of research and innovation. We are therefore committed to strengthening research capacity in our universities, supporting young researchers, building closer partnerships between academia and industry, and encouraging international research collaboration, especially among OIC member states, where IUT is uniquely placed to lead.

To the graduates, I say: today marks the beginning of your contribution, not the end of your learning. Stay curious, pursue research and higher studies, and carry your knowledge forward with humility, integrity, and compassion. Use it not only to build your own livelihood, but to create opportunity for others and to serve Bangladesh and the wider Ummah with honesty and diligence.

I reaffirm the Ministry of Education's continued support for IUT in its mission as an international center of academic and research excellence.

I wish IUT and its graduating students every success in the years ahead.

Dr. A.N.M. Ehsanul Hoque Milon



Convocation Speaker
38th Convocation
Islamic University of Technology (IUT)

Let me begin by extending my warmest congratulations to all the graduating students gathered here today on the momentous occasion of the 38th Convocation of the Islamic University of Technology (IUT). Your perseverance, discipline, and dedication have brought you to this proud milestone, and I commend each of you wholeheartedly for your achievement.
The establishment of IUT reflects the visionary contribution of late President Ziaur Rahman in positioning Bangladesh as a centre for international education, science and technology. That vision was carried forward by late Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia who inaugurated the Islamic Institute of Technology in 1995. Her support helped advance the institution's international character and its mission of promoting education, science, engineering and technology.
This convocation takes place at a defining moment in our nation's history. Following the historic general election of February 2026. Bangladesh has entered a new democratic chapter under the leadership of the Hon'ble Prime Minister Tarique Rahman. Out Government is committed to rebuilding public institutions of transparency, accountability, and merit, and to placing education at the very centre of nation-building.
Our Government is committed to investing more in education and research, modernising our curricula, and providing greater support to students through initiatives such as free school uniforms, school bags, and mid-day meals. At the higher education level, we will strengthen industry-academia collaboration, promote innovation, and create greater opportunities for our talented diaspora to contribute to national development. We want to transform brain drain into brain circulation by bringing global Bangladeshi expertise back to our universities through initiatives such as summer schools and visiting faculty programmes.
I world be remiss if I did not acknowledge the unwavering support and sacrifices of the parents and families of our graduates. Your encouragement and guidance have played an indispensable role in shaping the journey, and today we celebrate your contributions alongside theirs.
To the faculty, staff, and management of IUT, I extend my sincere appreciation for your relentless commitment to academic excellence and institutional advancement. As the country's first international university. IUT has grown into a leading engineering with a truly global international university. IUT has grown into a leading engineering institution with a truly global outlook. It brings together students and faculty from different countries and prepares young people to contribute not only to Bangladesh but also to the wider world.
IUT graduates are making valuable contributions to technology, engineering, research, and innovation, both at home and abroad. Their achievements demonstrate the ability of Bangladeshi talent to compete, excel and make a meaningful contribution on the global stage.
As you step into a rapidly changing world, I urge you to carry forward not only technical competence but also integrity, honesty and a genuine commitment to public service. Our country has no shortage of capable people; what it has long needed is capable people who act with integrity when it is inconvenient to do so. I hope you will be counted among them.
The Government of Bangladesh remains steadfast in tits commitment to fostering an environment conducive to innovation, enterprise, and opportunity, and we look forward to continued partnership with institutions like IUT in preparing the next generation of thinkers, innovators, and nation-builders.
In conclusion, I once again extend my heartfelt congratulations to the graduating students and express my gratitude to the entire IUT community for their tireless efforts in advancing the cause of education and research.
May Almighty Allah bless you with wisdom, perseverance, and humility in all your future endeavours.

Congratulations to the Class of 2026.

Mahdi Amin
Adviser to the Hon'ble Prime Minister
And Spokesperson of the Prime Minister's Office
Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh

IUT at a Glance

The Islamic University of Technology (IUT), a subsidiary organ of the OIC, unites 57 member states across the world. Established in 1981, IUT is Bangladesh's first international university, offering engineering, technology, and business programmes.

IUT maintains a 14:1 student-teacher ratio, over 90% employability, and strong collaboration with industry and academia. Ranked in the QS World University Rankings, it provides a diverse, research-driven environment supported by scholarships, and modern facilities.

Graduating Students' Statistics 2026

Graduating Students Academic Year 2024-2025	MPE ME+IPE	EEE	CSE CSE+SWE	Postgraduate	International
659	147	149	155	33	33
	CEE	TVE	BTM	Undergraduate	Bangladeshi
	126	25	57	626	626
					Male 482
					177 Female

Graduate Alumni

36	8896	90%
Member States	Graduate Alumni	Employability

Visit: www.iutoic-dhaka.edu



BRAC UNIVERSITY
Inspiring Excellence

Convocation Speaker
38th Convocation
Islamic University of Technology (IUT)

It is a great honour to join the Islamic University of Technology (IUT) on the occasion of its Convocation and to celebrate the accomplishments of its graduating students. This international university was established by 57-member-state-strong OIC to develop human resources particularly in engineering, science, business and technical education for the Muslim Ummah and for the world. By now over 8,000 students from 35 countries have graduated from IUT, and have been serving as professors at the University of Cambridge and other leading universities in Europe and beyond, and as professionals in world famous companies like Amazon, Google and Meta. Even back at home IUT alumnus has held the position of MD of WALTON - a home-grown company of great eminence and visibility throughout the country.

A convocation is both a celebration of achievement and a commencement of responsibility. As you step into the wider world, I encourage you to use your knowledge, skills, and creativity not only to pursue professional excellence but also to address the challenges of our time and contribute meaningfully to society.

In an era of rapid technological transformation, your success will depend not only on what you know, but also on how responsibly you use that knowledge to the benefit of society. Uphold integrity, embrace lifelong learning, and remain committed to innovation, service, and the betterment of humanity.

As graduates of IUT, you are its ambassadors. Being more fortunate members of the community, getting more access to resources than an average citizen, you should carry with you the values of excellence, knowledge, and human qualities to enlighten the society. I am confident that you will use these values to make meaningful contributions to the OIC community, Bangladesh and the wider world. In this world with generative AI is revolutionizing information processing and creating new knowledge, you must not turn your back to it, rather cautiously take advantage of its strength and should not let it use you. You must ensure your mastery over technology at all times. As a senior citizen my six cents' advice to you is: follow Voltaire's famously misquoted statement of defending to the death others' right to speak, never stop learning, choose impact over impression, do not fear failure, protect your curiosity over your certainty and be as vocal(?) in maintaining academic rigor as the great Nobel Laureate Paul Dirac, who was said to speak about a word an hour !!!

I extend my heartfelt congratulations to the graduating students and my sincere appreciation to their parents, teachers, and the entire IUT community for being with these young talented people full of spirit during their arduous journey with ups and downs and for having confidence in their ability. IUT is the only university in the country with students from as many as 35 different countries making the campus cosmopolitan and IUT students developing themselves as global citizens with necessary adaptability to different cultures and customs.

May your knowledge be a source of progress, your character a source of strength, your achievements a source of benefit to humanity and your deeds make this world a better place to live.

Best wishes for a bright and purposeful future.

Dr Mohammad Kaykobad
Distinguished Professor
CSE Department, Brac University, and
Fellow, Bangladesh Academy of Sciences



Chairman, Governing Board
Islamic University of Technology (IUT)

In the name of God most gracious most merciful

Excellences, honored guests, graduates, families and relatives of graduates, all respected attendees

I feel extremely happy and privileged to address you at the 38th Convocation of the Islamic University of Technology (IUT), which is a subsidiary organ of the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC). On this occasion, we commemorate not only your glorious academic success but also the enduring contribution of IUT, which was established for the development of the Ummah through engineering and technological education. For decades, IUT has opened up the gates of its vibrant and picturesque campus, rich with cultural diversity and expectation for new thoughts, for students from 57 OIC member states.

Your time at this international university—of late study nights, collaboration, and support for each other—demonstrates your efforts and the close-knit community that distinguishes this institution. Today, I wish to extend special thanks to the teaching faculties, administrative staff, operational teams and family members for supporting you in all aspects with generosity, their support and encouragement have been critical for your success in school.

IUT has persistently enhanced its academic and research capabilities guided by the Governing Board. IUT always aims to advance international cooperation and raise talent. I am particularly proud of the advances that have been achieved by our students at national and regional levels and of the increasing volume of study by our faculty and researchers in new fields such as sustainable energy, civil infrastructure, technology management, and AI-based solutions. These achievements attest to IUT's commitment towards making a significant contribution to the development imperatives of the Ummah and beyond.

As you enter the second half of your lives, do not forget that education is not merely a terminal but a launching pad. The knowledge, discipline, and compassion that you have acquired here will enable you to design responsibly, bring human beings closer, and do good for your communities with integrity and love.

On behalf of the Governing Board, faculty, and staff of IUT, I extend warm congratulations and best wishes on your success. Your triumphs inspire others, making your families, your countries, and this university proud, which will always be your academic home and alma mater.

Prof. Dr. Nasser M. Al-Aqeeli
Chairman, Governing Board
Islamic University of Technology (IUT)
A subsidiary organ of OIC



Vice Chancellor
Islamic University of Technology (IUT)

It is with immense pleasure and profound pride that I extend my heartfelt congratulations to everyone associated with the 38th Convocation of the Islamic University of Technology (IUT). This momentous occasion celebrates our graduating students, whose dedication, perseverance, and pursuit of excellence have culminated in this significant milestone. I also congratulate their parents, guardians, faculty members, officers, staff, alumni, and well-wishers, whose encouragement and support have made this success possible.

The Islamic University of Technology (IUT) stands as a unique institution committed to advancing science, engineering, technology, and technical education for the sustainable development of the OIC Member States. As the world undergoes rapid technological transformation driven by innovation, digitalization, and global collaboration, the responsibility of universities extends beyond imparting knowledge. We must cultivate visionary leaders, responsible professionals, and ethical citizens who possess the wisdom, creativity, and resilience to address the complex challenges of our time. At IUT, we remain steadfast in fulfilling this noble mission.

Our unwavering commitment to academic quality is reflected in the continuous enhancement of our programs through Outcome-Based Education (OBE). By aligning our curricula with international standards and the evolving needs of industry and society, we ensure that our graduates develop not only sound technical knowledge but also critical thinking, problem-solving ability, leadership, communication skills, and a lifelong passion for learning. Supported by a vibrant academic environment, dedicated faculty members, modern laboratories, and expanding research initiatives, we continue to nurture graduates capable of making a real difference at both national and global levels.

The achievements of IUT in education, research, innovation, and international engagement reflect the collective efforts of our entire university community. These accomplishments strengthen our resolve to establish IUT as a globally respected center of distinction, fostering impactful research, technological innovation, and strong partnerships that contribute to the prosperity and progress of the Muslim Ummah and the wider world.

To our graduates, I offer my warmest congratulations. As you embark upon a new chapter of your lives, remember that your degree is not merely a recognition of academic success but a responsibility to serve society with integrity, professionalism, compassion, and excellence. Be lifelong learners, embrace innovation with confidence, and strive to create positive change wherever your journey leads you. May your achievements inspire future generations and bring lasting honor to your alma mater.

On this auspicious occasion, I express my sincere gratitude to Almighty Allah (SWT) for His infinite mercy and blessings. May He continue to guide IUT in its pursuit of excellence and enable us to serve humanity through knowledge, innovation, and unwavering dedication. I wish the graduating class of the 38th Convocation every success, happiness, and fulfillment in all their future endeavors.

Prof. Dr. Md. Mamun Bin Ibne Reaz
Vice Chancellor, IUT



Pro Vice Chancellor
Islamic University of Technology (IUT)

It is my profound pleasure to extend my warmest congratulations to you on your remarkable achievements and the successful completion of your academic programs at the Islamic University of Technology (IUT). The 38th Convocation is a proud moment for all of us—a celebration of your unwavering commitment, perseverance, and pursuit of academic excellence. As the Pro-Vice Chancellor of this esteemed institution, I feel deeply honored to witness your graduation and to see you prepared to embark upon the next important chapter of your lives.

Today marks a momentous transition as our graduates step out from IUT's vibrant red-brick campus into a rapidly evolving global landscape. The journey to this stage has demanded years of rigorous discipline, relentless curiosity, and resilience, culminating in an academic achievement that reflects both your technical mastery and your personal growth.

As an international institution under the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), IUT has aimed to provide you with far more than technical training. You have been nurtured in an environment that bridges diverse cultures across member states, instilling a shared duty to serve humanity and drive scientific progress. The world you inherit urgently requires digital innovation, and sustainable solutions for complex global challenges. As pioneers of tomorrow, your mandate is to lead these transformations with technical excellence, absolute integrity, and profound empathy for the communities you serve.

This historic day also belongs to the dedicated faculty who guided your intellect, and to the parents and guardians whose sacrifices and prayers made this moment possible. To our graduates: carry the spirit of IUT with you into every laboratory, boardroom, and community you enter. Embrace the future with confidence, view every obstacle as an opportunity to learn, and remain lifelong ambassadors of leadership and global progress.

Congratulations once again on your well-deserved success. I wish you all the best in your future endeavors. May Almighty Allah (SWT) bless your knowledge, guide your footsteps, and grant you abundant success in all your future endeavors.

Dr. Hissein Araby Nour
Pro-Vice Chancellor, IUT





A CLEARER VISION FOR BANGLADESH: One million cataract surgeries and eye care for all



DR TAREQ SALAHUDDIN

Bangladesh's eye-care challenge extends far beyond hospital corridors. A 2020 national survey found refractive errors in 48.6 per cent of people surveyed, excluding presbyopia, yet spectacle coverage was only 26 per cent. For many families, something as treatable as poor eyesight still disrupts education, income and independent living. Cataracts, uncorrected refractive errors and diabetic eye disease add to the pressure on a health system where specialist services are unevenly distributed.

Against this backdrop, Dr M A Muhit, Minister of State for Health and Family Welfare, is positioning eye health as a public health priority. His vision, set out most recently at a World Sight Day discussion in Dhaka on 8 October, centres on taking affordable services closer to communities, rather than expecting patients to travel long distances for treatment.

At the centre is a proposed $130 million government investment over the next five years. Muhit says the money will support training for ophthalmologists, better infrastructure and expansion of treatment facilities, including district and remote services. The plan is ambitious: one million free cataract operations, distribution of 10 million spectacles and access to primary eye care for approximately 20 million people nationwide.

His emphasis on cataract surgery reflects the devastating yet often reversible loss of sight caused by untreated cataracts. The distribution of spectacles addresses a different, equally important problem: children struggling to see classroom boards, and adults whose uncorrected vision limits their work. Schoolchildren are explicitly included, with plans for vision screening, spectacles and other necessary eye-care services.

However, the minister's priorities extend beyond a headline target. He has repeatedly highlighted the need for a coordinated national approach in which public hospitals, specialist institutions, professional bodies, non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and development partners work together. At the launch of the WHO SPECS 2030 initiative in August, he warned against leaving eye care as disconnected activities and called for integrated provision, including cataract and diabetic retinopathy services.

In practical terms, that means building capacity outside major cities and creating pathways from early screening to specialist intervention. He has also proposed dedicated outpatient, inpatient and operating theatre services at planned 151-bed upazila hospitals, a step intended to reduce the need for patients to travel to major cities.

It also means treating corrective lenses as an essential intervention, not a luxury. Bangladesh's participation in SPECS 2030 links its domestic ambitions with the global goal of increasing effective refractive-error coverage by 40 percentage points by 2030.

Yet implementation will be the decisive test. Recruiting and retaining trained eye-care professionals, ensuring reliable surgical quality, maintaining equipment and reaching underserved populations will require sustained financing and transparent monitoring. Numbers of operations and spectacles supplied matter, but improved vision and equitable access will be the more meaningful measures.

With the World Sight Day commitments, Muhit has outlined a potentially transformative agenda. Whether it changes the everyday experience of someone waiting for cataract surgery or a child unable to read the classroom board will depend on how quickly these promises become services within reach.

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Violence leaves scars we cannot always see

Violence rarely ends when the bruises fade. For women and children who experience sexual or gender-based violence, the damage can follow them into classrooms, workplaces, relationships and healthcare settings. Yet too often, survivors carry the burden quietly while systems respond only after harm has occurred.

In Bangladesh, where conversations around sexual violence can still be clouded by shame, fear and social pressure, prevention and compassionate support matter enormously. The Sexual Violence Research Initiative Forum 2026, being held in Bangkok this October, is putting these issues under a global spotlight.

The gathering brings together researchers, policymakers, health professionals and advocates to ask a crucial question: how can violence be stopped before it happens?

Discussions will explore ways to prevent child sexual abuse, make essential services safer for women and girls during emergencies, improve how violence is documented, and understand its lasting impact on mental wellbeing.

For Bangladesh, these conversations carry particular relevance. Hospitals, schools and community services can become important places for recognising danger and connecting survivors with safe support.

Ending violence requires more than reacting to horrific incidents. It means listening without judgement, building safer systems and using evidence to prevent the next survivor from ever having to become one.





The infections quietly fuelling cancer - and the chance to stop them



DR SUMAIYA KHALED

For Bangladesh, the latest global cancer figures carry an uncomfortable message: some cancers may begin with infections that can often be prevented, detected or treated long before a tumour appears. In a country where families already face the emotional and financial shock of cancer, that makes prevention increasingly urgent.

A new worldwide analysis estimates that infections were responsible for about 2.3 million new cancer cases in 2024; roughly one in every eight cancers diagnosed globally. Strikingly, 77 per cent of these cases occurred in low- and middle-income countries.

Two infections dominated the picture. A common stomach bacterium was linked to about 760,000 cancer cases, mostly stomach cancer. HPV, a widespread virus passed through intimate contact, accounted for around 750,000 cases and was the cause behind cervical cancer in the study. Hepatitis B and C, which can quietly damage the liver for years, were also major contributors to liver cancer.

The findings matter for Bangladesh because the story is not simply about treating cancer after it arrives. It is about stopping some cancers before they have the chance to begin.

Vaccination against HPV and hepatitis B can prevent infections that later lead to cancer. Testing and timely treatment for hepatitis B, hepatitis C and the stomach bacterium can also reduce risk. Safer injections, protection against sexually transmitted infections and regular cervical screening add further layers of defence.

Yet the global picture exposes a familiar inequality. Countries with fewer resources carry much of the burden, even though many of the preventive tools already exist. Cost, limited access, lack of awareness and gaps in health services can turn a preventable infection into a cancer diagnosis years later.

Cancer is often spoken about as bad luck, family history or an unavoidable disease of ageing. This research adds another perspective: prevention may sometimes start with something as ordinary as a vaccine, a test or treating an infection early.

For Bangladesh, that is more than a medical message. It is an opportunity to move cancer care upstream before the diagnosis, before the hospital bed, and before a family hears the words it fears most.

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The hidden health cost of holding your urine

STAR HEALTH DESK

Ignoring the urge to urinate can seem harmless. A meeting runs late, traffic crawls, a classroom cannot be left, or the nearest toilet feels too unpleasant to use. So we wait. Occasionally, that is usually fine. But repeatedly turning "I'll go later" into a daily habit may carry a hidden health cost. The problem is familiar



to office workers, teachers, students, healthcare staff, drivers and garment workers, whose long shifts, crowded journeys or limited access to clean toilets can make bathroom breaks difficult. Some even drink less water to avoid needing the toilet.

When urine stays in the bladder too long, germs have more opportunity to grow, increasing the chance of painful urine infections. Regularly stretching the bladder may also make it harder for its muscles to work properly, sometimes leaving urine behind after a toilet visit. Over time, this can contribute to urgency, leakage or difficulty emptying the bladder.

There is no prize for enduring discomfort. Drink enough water normally and respond when your body gives a clear signal. If urination becomes painful, unusually frequent, difficult, bloody or comes with fever, seek prompt medical advice. A toilet break is not laziness; it is part of basic healthcare.

When grades become too heavy to carry



SARKER M SHAHEEN

In Bangladesh, a student's future can sometimes feel as if it hangs on a single sheet of exam results. Behind the grades, coaching classes and anxious family expectations, however, many young people may be carrying distress that adults fail to notice.

The warning signs are difficult to ignore. At least ten students died by suicide within six days of this year's secondary school results, according to figures cited from the Aachol Foundation. In 2025, at least 403 student suicides were reported, nearly half involving schoolchildren. The real toll may be higher because these figures rely on media reports.

Yet help remains painfully scarce. An estimated 12.6 per cent of Bangladeshi children live with a mental health problem, while more than 90 per cent receive no formal care. Fear of stigma makes the silence deeper. Sadness may be dismissed as laziness, anxiety as weakness, and sleeplessness before exams as something a child should simply overcome.

Teachers could become an important safety net. Bangladesh is already testing a school-based mental health and suicide prevention programme across 10 districts, reaching about 20,000 students and training 488 teachers.



The next step should be simple but ambitious: train at least one teacher in every secondary school to recognise distress, listen without judgement and guide students towards appropriate help. Schools should also build links with local health centres and involve parents and coaching centres in conversations about exam pressure.

A child's worth cannot be reduced to a GPA. Schools must prepare children not only to pass examinations, but also withstand exam pressure. Sometimes, one observant teacher, one compassionate conversation and one timely referral may change the course of a young life.

The writer is a researcher in child and youth mental health at the Cumming School of Medicine, University of Calgary. Email: sm.shaheen@ucalgary.ca



DHAKA SUNDAY OCTOBER 11, 2026, ASHWIN 26, 1433 BS

SPORT

Portugal provisionally suspends Ronaldo

AFP, *Barcelona*



Cristiano Ronaldo has been provisionally suspended after the Portuguese Football Federation (FPF) announced on Saturday that it had opened disciplinary proceedings against the 41-year-old over his decision to leave the national team's camp.

Ronaldo apologised to supporters earlier this week while criticising Portugal coach Jorge Jesus, saying he would accept any punishment imposed on him.

"Disciplinary proceedings have been initiated against Cristiano Ronaldo," the federation said in a statement, classifying the case as "urgent" and confirming that the forward would remain suspended pending a final decision on the punishment.

Ronaldo left Portugal's camp in Copenhagen before their Nations League match against Denmark last week following a rift with Jesus.

Ronaldo, who was not brought on despite warming up against Norway on September 27 and later learned that he would not start against Denmark on October 1, accused Jesus of twice breaking his word over his role in the team.

According to Portuguese media, under the federation's regulations, a player who misses a training session, a match, or a national team activity faces a suspension ranging from one to six months.

Portugal won all four of their Nations League matches and qualified for the quarterfinals with two games to spare. Ronaldo returned to club action yesterday, scoring in Al-Nassr's 3-0 win over Al-Diriyah in a Saudi Pro League match.

Portugal host Denmark on November 14 and then travel to face Wales on November 17 in their final two Nations League Group A4 matches.

SHORT CORNER

Plenty of changes as Aliss earns maiden ODI call-up

Off-spinner Aliss Al Islam earned his maiden ODI call-up, while Litton Das, Mustafizur Rahman and Hasan Mahmud returned to Bangladesh's squad for this month's tri-nation tournament involving Afghanistan and Zimbabwe.

Tigresses eye response in second Australia WODI

Bangladesh will look to bounce back from their opening defeat when they face Australia in the second Women's ODI at Allan Border Field in Brisbane on Sunday, with the hosts leading the three-match series 1-0. The visitors were bowled out for 166 in 49.4 overs in Friday's series opener, their first-ever ODI on Australian soil, before Australia cruised to a seven-wicket victory in just 25.4 overs, with 146 balls to spare.

Naim, Mim hit tons as Mahedi shines with ball in NCL

Mohammad Naim and Mim Mosaddeak struck centuries for their respective sides, while Khulna Division's Mahedi Hasan claimed six wickets against Rajshahi Division on the opening day of the second round of the ongoing National Cricket League (NCL) on Saturday.

***Read full stories on The Daily Star's website*



Australia's Matt Renshaw struck a career-best 190 on Day 2 of the first Test against hosts South Africa in Durban yesterday, helping the visitors recover from a precarious 124 for six to post 390 in their first innings. In a near-flawless innings lasting almost eight hours, Renshaw forged an 86-run seventh-wicket stand with skipper Pat Cummins before combining with Nathan Lyon (27) for a ninth-wicket partnership of 134 -- a record for Australia in Tests against South Africa. The left-hander fell just 10 runs short of a double century, but Australia finished the day on top after reducing the hosts to 27 for one at stumps.

PHOTO: **AFP**

Missed review adds to bowling woes

SPORTS REPORTER



PHOTO: **ACB**

Bangladesh's bowlers endured a frustrating outing on the second day of the one-off Test against Afghanistan yesterday, claiming just four wickets as the hosts finished in a strong position in Abu Dhabi.

After adding 29 runs to their overnight score, the Tigers lost their remaining two wickets early in the morning to be bowled out for 346 in their first innings, with off-spinner Nayeem Hasan remaining unbeaten on 35 at the Zayed Cricket Stadium.

With five experienced bowlers in their line-up, Bangladesh would have expected to put Afghanistan's inexperienced batting order under pressure. However, the latter negotiated the challenge confidently, reaching 211 for four at stumps, trailing by 135 runs.

Afghanistan skipper Rahmat Shah, who has featured in all 13 Tests played by his country, was Bangladesh's chief tormentor, remaining unbeaten on 84 off 186 balls and moving closer to his fourth Test century. Opener Abdul Malik, whose previous highest Test score was 30 in six matches, also impressed with 62 off 120 deliveries, registering his maiden Test fifty.

Pace duo Ebadot Hossain (2-50) and Hasan Mahmud (1-36) shared three wickets between them, bowling 11 and 16 overs, respectively, in scorching heat. However, their three-pronged spin attack of Taijul Islam, Mehidy Hasan Miraz and Nayeem, who bowled 51 overs collectively, managed just one breakthrough. Miraz dismissed Hashmatullah Shahidi for a two-ball duck.

Bangladesh spin coach Mushtaq Ahmed, however, remained confident that his bowlers could make an impact as the match progressed, provided the batters extended their first-innings lead in the second innings.

"I think spinners are going to play a huge role because, for the first two, three, four days... the first three days, I think, the pitch is going to get slower and, obviously, there is going to be less spin. But with the passage of time, because of this weather, I think the pitch is going to start spinning more," Mushtaq said after the day's play.

"Hopefully, if we can defend the score and score more runs in the second innings, we can put them under pressure."

Besides their lack of penetration, the visitors also missed opportunities in the field, while their decision-making with reviews left much to be desired.

On just the fifth ball of Afghanistan's innings, Bangladesh reviewed an appeal for caught behind against Sediqullah Atal. Replays, however, showed a clear gap between bat and ball, with the delivery merely brushing the batter's pads on its way to the wicketkeeper.

In Hasan's next over, Atal edged one through to the wicketkeeper, but Bangladesh did not review the decision after the umpire turned down the appeal. Skipper Najmul Hossain Shanto was visibly frustrated with himself after watching the replay on the big screen, even making a kicking motion in frustration.

Afghanistan were four without loss at the time, with Atal on the same score. Although Hasan eventually dismissed the opener for 17 in the 11th over, Afghanistan's openers had already blunted the new ball, easing the pressure on the batters who followed.

Bangladesh will now hope to break the 72-run fifth-wicket partnership between Rahmat and Ikram Alikhil -- unbeaten on 26 at stumps -- early today.

Goal fest in BFL

Sports Reporter

Goals continued to flow in the Bangladesh Football League as the final two matches of the third round produced 14 goals yestreday.

Bangladesh Police FC thrashed Young Men's Fakirerpool Club 8-0 in Gazipur, while Mohammedan Sporting Club blanked Arambagh Krira Sangha 6-0 in Munshiganj.

Senegalese forward Rassoul Ba scored a hattrick and MS Bablu netted twice as Police maintained their perfect start to the season. Manik Molla, Shamim Ahmed and Arman Foysal Akash scored the other goals for Asifuzzaman's charges.

Police lead the table with nine points from three matches and are yet to concede a goal this season.

Meanwhile, Mohammedan, playing only their second league match, produced a commanding performance against Arambagh, with captain Souleymane Diabate scoring a hattrick. Shahriar Emon, Minhajur Abedin Rakib and Sourav Dewan scored the other goals for the Black and Whites.

The round had produced 18 goals on Friday, taking the overall tally to 32 at an average of 5.33 goals per match.



Bruno Guimaraes celebrates after scoring the winner as Arsenal come from a goal down to beat Leeds 2-1 in the Premier League, making a winning return after the three-week international break on Saturday. Defender James Justin gave Leeds a deserved lead early in the second half, but Riccardo Calafiori equalised minutes later before Guimaraes finished off a finely crafted team move. The result lifted Arsenal level on points with Manchester City at the top of the table. City, who have been embroiled in controversy since being found guilty of financial breaches, can move ahead of Mikel Arteta's men when they face Liverpool away today.

PHOTO: **ARSENAL**

WHAT TO WATCH

T SPORTS
One-off Test, Day 3
Afghanistan vs Bangladesh
World Championship of Legends
Australia vs West Indies
Live from 6:00 pm

India vs Bangladesh
Live from 9:30 pm
La Liga
Racing Santander vs Valencia
Live from 1:00 am (Monday)

STAR SPORTS SELECT

HD1, RAJDHANI TV
English Premier League
Crystal Palace vs Nottm Forest
Hull vs Everton
Live from 7:00 pm
Liverpool vs Man City
Live from 9:30 pm







JS body questions 4,000MW solar power target

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The parliamentary standing committee on the power, energy, and mineral resources ministry yesterday raised questions over the progress of the government's renewable energy programme.

At its first meeting at the Jatiya Sangsad Bhaban, the committee asked the ministry to provide detailed data on how much electricity rooftop solar systems are supplying to the national grid.

Committee seeks details on rooftop solar system, capacity payments, fuel stockpiles, LPG prices, domestic gas exploration, and the costs of proposed energy projects

The ministry was asked to present the figures at its next meeting, along with written answers to lawmakers' questions.

It also sought details on capacity payments, fuel stockpiles, LPG prices, domestic gas exploration and the costs of proposed energy projects.

Committee member Nazibur Rahman said ministry officials could not provide specific data on progress under the rooftop solar incentive programme. They said around 2MW of solar power was being added to the grid daily, but gave no supporting details.

The government aims to add 4,000MW of solar power

SEE PAGE 8 COL 4



Police personnel stand guard near a mural of Rabindranath Tagore outside Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy in the capital's Segunbagicha after a group attempted to deface the poet's portrait with black paint yesterday. Law enforcers intervened and detained four people, including a woman. The paint was later cleaned off and security personnel deployed at the site. The mural is among portraits of 10 celebrated cultural figures, including Kazi Nazrul Islam, Lalon Shah, Satyajit Ray and Zainul Abedin, commissioned by Dhaka South City Corporation after it cleared the adjoining footpath of encroachments on October 5. PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

Outcry as Trump agrees to buy Russian diesel

Zelensky, EU blast deal after Russian strikes kill 15 in Ukraine

AGENCIES

Donald Trump is on a fresh collision course with Volodymyr Zelensky and European allies after his stunning agreement to buy Russian diesel upended years of US and Western pressure on the Kremlin to end its war against Ukraine.

Zelensky reacted furiously to Trump's announcement of the deal with Vladimir Putin on Friday, calling it "absolutely terrible" and "not fair and not honest".

The Ukrainian president said "back room deals" with the Russian leader would give Putin more chances on the battlefield. Yesterday morning, Ukrainian officials reported that a Russian attack had killed 12 people in the south-east, including three children, and Moscow claimed its troops were advancing in the east.

In a move likely to create a fresh crisis with Washington's Nato allies, Trump announced the deal with Putin on his Truth Social network, saying it was essential to reduce fuel prices in the US, which have soared as a result of his decision to go to war against Iran.

"I have just concluded a highly successful discussion with President Vladimir Putin of Russia," he said, to deliver millions of tonnes of diesel fuel over the next few months.

He added: "Diesel prices for Americans and, indeed, the world, will be COMING DOWN, IN RECORD NUMBERS, AND FAST! Lower prices for Americans, especially our Great Farmers, Ranchers, and Truckers, are my greatest priority."

Fuel prices have soared since Iran closed the Strait of Hormuz, a strategically sensitive choke point that was the passageway for 20%



Rescuers work at a damaged building by a Russian air strike in Zaporizhzhia, Ukraine, yesterday. PHOTO: REUTERS

of global oil supplies before the war. While costs have risen for motorists -- a gallon of regular fuel in the US is about $4.20 (£3.17) -- it is the price of diesel, which last month hit a record high of $6.52, that has inflicted the

SEE PAGE 8 COL 4

PM likely to visit Japan on Oct 26

Says Humaiun Kobir



UNB, *Dhaka*

Prime Minister Tarique Rahman's upcoming visit to Japan will focus on strengthening bilateral relations, deepening economic partnerships and increasing investment, said Humaiun Kobir, state minister-1 for foreign affairs.

Tarique is likely to go on a four-day visit on October 26 after Japan invited him, reaffirming Tokyo's commitment to further strengthening bilateral relations with Dhaka.

During the visit, Bangladesh would prioritise trade, investment, and development partnerships across various sectors, in line with its approach to engagement with other countries, Humaiun told reporters yesterday after attending a seminar titled "From workforce to strategic

SEE PAGE 2 COL 6

GOVT OFFICIALS' PERFORMANCE

AI-driven review in the works

Public admin ministry drafts proposal; policymakers say it'll promote 'meritocracy'

BAHARAM KHAN

The government plans to replace the manual evaluation method used for civil servants' annual confidential reports (ACRs) with an artificial intelligence (AI)-driven review mechanism aimed at assessing them on merit, integrity and job performance.

"The prime minister wants to place the administration's best officers in responsible positions. At present, it is difficult to select qualified candidates in the absence of a sound method. That is why work is underway to devise a new system," Abdul Bari, state minister for public administration, told The Daily Star.

His ministry has drafted a proposal for introducing a digital peer review mechanism involving up to 45 superiors and subordinates to evaluate each officer, replacing the current method in which only two supervisors carry out the evaluation.

Under the existing manual ACR system, an officer scoring between 85 and 100 is rated "excellent", while one receiving 71 to 84 is graded "good", and one scoring 50 to 70 is considered "average". The scores are based entirely on assessments by the officer's two immediate superiors.

The ACR, a confidential assessment of an officer's performance, integrity, conduct and leadership, serves as the main basis for promotions, key postings and selection for advanced training.

There have been allegations that the current method fails to reflect true performance as personal preferences or dislikes of two superior officers often affect a subordinate's ACR score.

Seeking anonymity, several former and current officials in the ministry's Confidential Report Branch said more than 80 percent of officers get above 90

SEE PAGE 8 COL 1

KEY FEATURES OF SYSTEM

- Officers to be assessed on 5 key criteria
- 30-45 colleagues, including superiors and subordinates, to take part in evaluation
- Algorithm to identify unusually positive, negative evaluations
- Feedback to be drawn from past, current workplaces
- Evaluators to remain anonymous



Vendors set up makeshift stalls dangerously close to the railway tracks in the capital's Jurain Railway Gate area as a train passes through. The longstanding practice of operating shops along the tracks poses a serious risk of accidents, endangering vendors, shoppers and train passengers alike. The photo was taken yesterday. PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

IN FOCUS

CNG driver confesses to rape, murder of schoolgirl

Suspect arrested in Ctg day after the teen's body was found

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Cumilla*

A CNG-run auto-rickshaw driver has confessed to raping and killing a 15-year-old schoolgirl in Cumilla early Thursday, police said.

Additional Superintendent of Police Pankaj Barua disclosed this at a press conference at the superintendent of police's office today, following the driver's arrest.

The suspect, Sumon Mia, was arrested at his brother's house in Chattogram on Friday, police said.

Pankaj said Sumon allegedly strangled Tazmin with a gamchha before raping her and then pressed

SEE PAGE 8 COL 4

Youth beaten to death over theft allegation

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Bogura*

A Santal youth working at a brick kiln was allegedly beaten to death following an accusation of theft in Bogura Sadar upazila yesterday.

The deceased was identified as Ripon Murmu, 27, of Belowa Bamanpara in Dinajpur's Ghoraghat upazila.

According to his family, Ripon had worked at a brick kiln owned by Akter Rahman Duke in Bogura Sadar's Chanpara area for the past eight to 10 years.

Ripon's father, Mosej Murmu, told The Daily Star, "My son was beaten yesterday morning during an arbitration over the alleged theft of a welding machine. Later that night, his body was sent home in an ambulance."

Robiul Islam, a member of Palsha Union Parishad in Ghoraghat, said he

SEE PAGE 8 COL 6

INTERNATIONAL DAY OF
THE GIRL CHILD
END CHILD MARRIAGE AND INVEST IN GIRLS

The Daily Star
DHAKA SUNDAY OCTOBER 11, 2026
ASHWIN 26, 1433 BS

SUPPLEMENT S1

Zimbabwean human rights activist and lawyer Nyaradzayi Gumbonzvanda once said, "I call child marriage child rape". The words are stark because the reality is. Across Bangladesh, too many girls still see their childhoods narrowed by poverty, violence, the cost of staying in school, social expectations that arrive with puberty and, ultimately, marriage before adulthood. This International Day of the Girl Child, we ask what pushes girls towards early marriage, what prevents them from staying in school, why the systems meant to protect them from violence fail, and why growing up in a patriarchal society so often means growing less free. Ending child marriage means protecting childhood itself. The mission is unequivocal: keep girls safe, keep them in school, protect their right to choose their own futures – and end child marriage, for every girl, everywhere.

BANGLADESH'S CHILD MARRIAGE PARADOX

Rajshahi records highest rate; Sylhet lowest despite higher poverty, lower education levels

ABDULLAH HEL BUBUN

Over the past 25 years, Bangladesh has sharply reduced maternal and newborn deaths, expanded education and employment, and cut poverty. Yet child marriage remains a striking exception.

Despite industrialisation, urbanisation and rising wealth, progress has been slow.

The 1993-94 Bangladesh Demographic and Health Survey (BDHS) found 73 percent of women aged 20-24 married before 18. By 2022, this fell to 51 percent, a decline of just 22 percentage points in nearly three decades, averaging 0.7 points annually, far slower than in India, Pakistan, Nepal and the Maldives.

Education and wealth, strong global predictors of child marriage, have been less effective here. The Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS) 2025 found that 25 percent of women aged 20-24 with higher secondary education married before 18.



AI GENERATED IMAGE

Even among the wealthiest households, nearly one in three – 31.5 percent – married before they were 18. The urban-rural gap was also narrow, at 42.5 percent and 49.4 percent.

WHERE SHE LIVES SHAPES WHEN SHE MARRIES

A 2024 Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS) small-area estimate puts child marriage prevalence among women aged 20-24 at that time at 38.3-65.7 percent across 541 upazilas.

Khulna and Rajshahi have the highest rates. All 64 upazilas in Khulna exceed 60 percent (60.1-64.0), as do 69 of Rajshahi's 70, except Matihar.

Chapainawabganj Sadar tops the country at 65.7 percent, with other high-prevalence areas in Bogura, Joypurhat and Sirajganj.

Most areas of Barishal, Chattogram, Mymensingh, Rangpur and Dhaka divisions record 48-53 percent. Within Dhaka, Shahbag records 39 percent, the lowest, and Mirpur 60 percent, the highest.

In contrast, every Sylhet upazila remains below 43 percent (38.3-42.8). Sunamganj has the lowest district-level prevalence, while Sunamganj's Jagannathpur upazila records the national minimum of 38.3 percent.

MARRIED YOUNG, WISHING THEY HAD WAITED

Women in Khulna, Rajshahi and Rangpur divisions marry younger than women in any other parts of the country, and they are also the most likely to say that they would have preferred to marry later, according to Bangladesh Demographic and Health Survey (BDHS) 2022.

In these three divisions, the median age at first marriage among women aged 20-49 is 16, the lowest in the country. This means, half of the women there were married by 16 or younger.

These divisions also have the most married women who say they would have preferred to marry later: 47 percent in Rajshahi, 42 percent in Khulna and 37.8 percent in Rangpur.

Sylhet division sits at the opposite. It is the only division in Bangladesh where the median age of first marriage exceeds 18, standing at 18.8 years.

Just 16.6 percent of women in Sylhet said they would have preferred to marry later. Women in Rajshahi and Khulna are three times more likely to say that.

While the survey does not explore causal mechanisms, research on effects of child marriage sheds light on why these attitudes differ across divisions.

Research links child marriage to lower education, reduced status within husbands' families, less reproductive autonomy and higher maternal mortality risks. A study analyzing data across 34 countries, including Bangladesh, also found that women who married as children faced a substantially higher risk of physical or sexual violence from an intimate partner compared with those who married as adults.

THE SYLHET PUZZLE

Conventional indicators suggest Sylhet should have high child marriage prevalence.

It has the lowest proportion of women aged 15-49 with secondary education or higher, the highest without education, and the lowest female employment: 18.8 percent against 32 percent nationally, according to BDHS 2022.

Wealth offers little explanation. Noakhali and Dhaka have among the lowest poverty rates, at 6.1 and 6.8 percent, yet child marriage averages around 52 percent across their upazilas.

In Meherpur, Khulna, Sirajganj and Bogura, also among the 10 lowest-poverty districts, over six in ten women married before 18.

A 2020 Iris Group report likewise found Sylhet lagging in socioeconomic and health indicators despite its lowest child marriage prevalence.

Iris Group is a women-led international development consulting firm.

To investigate, The Daily Star visited Jagannathpur, speaking to teachers, officials, students, politicians and residents across Sunamganj.

Jagannathpur Upazila Nirbahi Officer Md Islam Uddin attributed later marriages partly to men seeking to establish themselves abroad.

"Compared to the rest of Bangladesh, young men in Sylhet marry at an older age. This is also a diaspora-heavy region, and most aim to go abroad. Moving abroad and getting established takes time."

The 2022 census shows 37.77 percent of Sylhet residents unmarried, against 28.65 percent nationally. In Jagannathpur, the figures are 49.96 percent for men and 36.28 percent for women.

About one in four Jagannathpur households receives remittances, according to the census district report. Locals say most migrants live in the UK.

Shitangshu Shekhar Dhar, former vice-chairman of neighbouring Shantiganj upazila, cited European influence: "Locals here look up to those based in the UK or Europe."

Yet even Sunamganj upazilas with relatively few UK or European migrants have lower prevalence than almost anywhere else.

A.K.M. Azad Mia, acting headmaster of Government Jubilee School, said historical and cultural factors might be at play. As evidence, he pointed to his own mother, who married in 1965 at the age of 24.

HIGHEST IN C'NAWABGANJ SADAR

Ashraful Alam runs a tea stall with his son in Noyagola village, outside Chapainawabganj municipality. Marrying off his daughters before 18 had "unburdened" him, he said.

He had intended to wait until one daughter turned 18 but accepted a dowry-free proposal, fearing delay could bring dowry demands and jeopardise her safety.

"This is also in line with Shariah," he said, arguing that legal marriage ages of 18 for women and 21 for men disregard mental and physical maturity.

Chapainawabganj Sadar has the country's highest upazila-level prevalence: 65.7 percent of women aged 18-49, according to the 2024 BBS estimate.

Yet enforcement figures barely reflect the scale. Only 18 child marriages were prevented districtwide in the first six months of 2026, and another 41 during 2023-25.

Government officials, civil society representatives, politicians, students and residents cited limited women's employment, religious conservatism, poverty, safety concerns, weak enforcement and scant political attention.

Shahida Akhter, assistant director of the Chapainawabganj Department of Women Affairs, identified scarce jobs as a major driver.

"Women hardly go outside the district for work, and there is nothing for them here."

The 2022 census district report shows 58.67 percent of women aged 15-24 in Chapainawabganj Sadar are not in education, employment or training. Nearly half of girls aged 15-19 neither study nor work.

Dr Sultana Papia, a medical officer at the district Civil Surgeon's Office, said she had never witnessed such widespread child marriage elsewhere she had lived or worked. The northwestern district has over 18 lakh residents.

"They marry off children at 12-13, and every child is conditioned to believe early marriage is normal. To them, marriage is like playing with dolls."

Blaming poverty and "religious fanaticism", she recalled health workers being denied entry to some madrasas to administer cervical cancer vaccines to girls.

"We even sent religious figures and approached local political leaders, but these clerics would not allow it. This kind of superstition is particularly prevalent in this district."

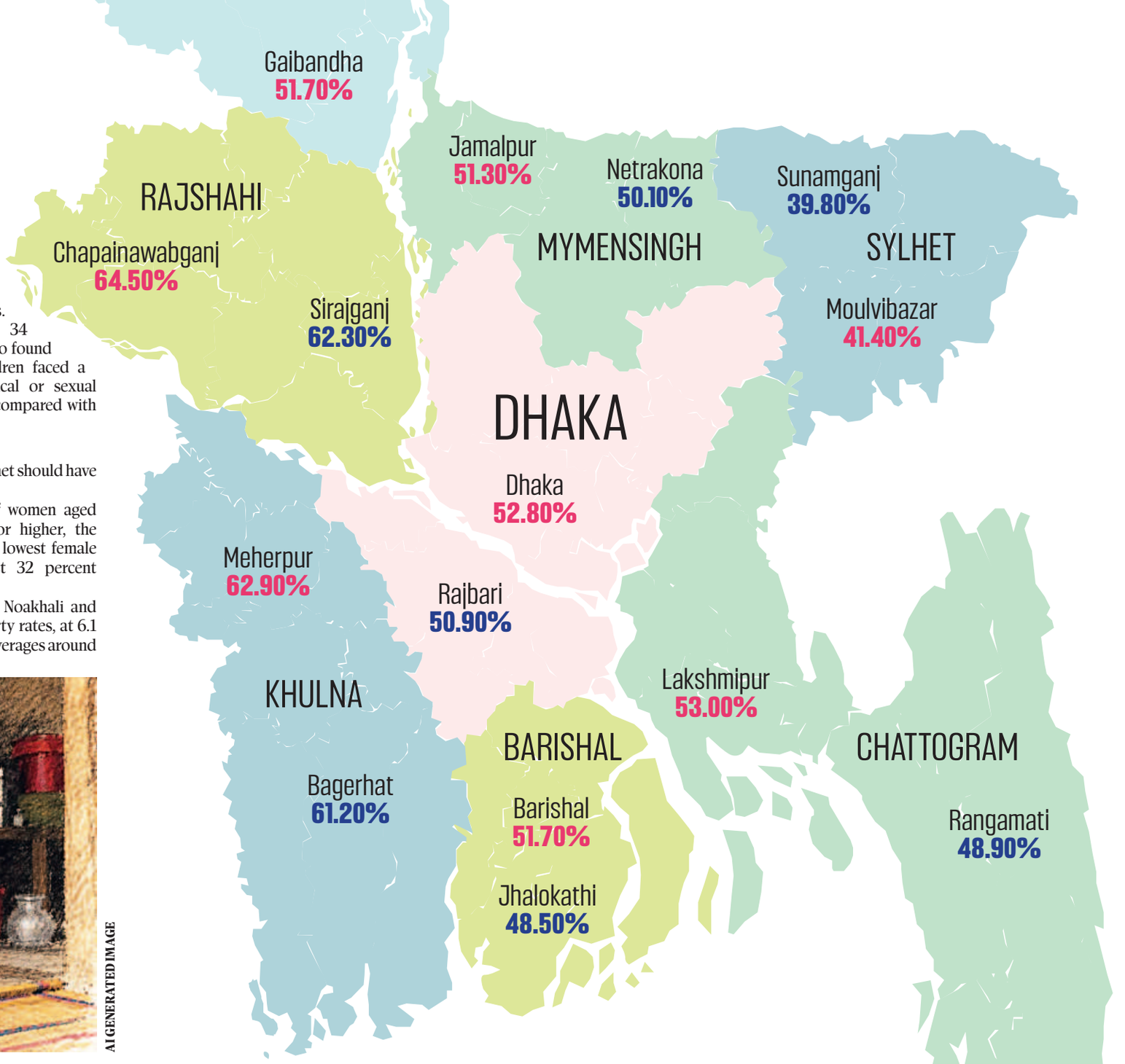
Md Joynal Abedin, secondary education officer of Chapainawabganj Sadar upazila, called religious conservatism the "driving force", alleging clerics even blamed girls for sexual violence that girls themselves face.

Atikul Islam, a student of Exim Bank Agricultural University, cited widespread sexual harassment of girls. "Parents concerned about their daughters' safety marry them off at 16-17."

Residents and government officials also alleged marriage registrars, or kazis, facilitated child marriages.

"They charge more than triple their usual fee to handle a child marriage," said a district education office official, requesting anonymity.

Together, these accounts show how economic insecurity, social pressures and weak enforcement continue to sustain child marriage, even as the country progresses on other fronts.





Research links child marriage to lower education, reduced status within husbands' families, less reproductive autonomy and higher maternal mortality risks.

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SUPPLEMENT S2



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How the system fails
ABUSED GIRLS
From complaint to courtroom

NILIMA JAHAN

A few days ago, in a lawyer's chamber in the capital, a mother pleaded for something the law does not allow.

Her six-year-old daughter had allegedly been raped by her father, a CNG driver. After the child's grandmother filed a case leading to his arrest, the family faced financial ruin.

"Please help me withdraw the case so I can get his bail," Fahmida Akter, a lawyer at the Dhaka Medical College One-Stop Crisis Centre (OCC), recalled the mother pleading. "I have two small children to feed. Where do I go? He made a mistake, but he promised to run the family once he gets out."

Told the case could not simply be withdrawn through an informal settlement, the mother left without seeking further legal aid.

In another case, the father of a 12-year-old survivor sought an out-of-court settlement despite his daughter having testified. Influential relatives of the accused had repeatedly pressured the family, the legal team said.

"Apa, suppose the man gets sentenced after two years," Fahmida recalled him asking. "By that time, I won't even be alive."

The cases expose failures in Bangladesh's child-protection system. Despite specialised laws, tribunals and reforms, protection can break down from disclosure and emergency care to investigation, prosecution and trial, particularly when abusers are family members or trusted adults.

Poverty, intimidation and inadequate witness protection, financial support and state intervention can make abandoning cases seem safer than seeking justice.

Legal analyst and researcher Fowzul Azim, a retired senior district judge, blamed failures throughout the law-enforcement process rather than inadequate laws.

Evidence may be lost, witnesses disappear, families face pressure and children remain unprotected before cases reach court, he said. Since judges must decide on available evidence, improving convictions requires stronger investigations, forensic examinations, prosecutions, witness protection and child-friendly trials, not merely harsher punishment.

When abusers are relatives, families cannot remain children's sole protectors, he said. The state must provide alternative guardianship, legal representation, shelter and psychosocial support.

"Our goal should not simply be a speedy trial. It should be a speedy and accurate trial that minimises the child's risk of re-traumatisation," he said.

A poorly handled trial, even after years, is not judicial success, he added. Children must not be victimised again while seeking justice.

WHEN TRUST BECOMES A THREAT

A 2025 media-monitoring audit by child-rights organisation Shishurai Shob examined 308 reported child-rape cases. The accused were immediate neighbours in 40.58 percent, acquaintances in 21.43 percent, teachers or religious instructors in 14.61 percent, close relatives in 13.64 percent and strangers in just 9.74 percent.

The audit found 59.09 percent of reported sexual-abuse cases and 66.12 percent of 124 monitored child-murder cases occurred at home.

Roksana Sultana, executive director of Breaking the Silence, said abuse by relatives or guardians often remained hidden because of inadequate supervision, concerns over "social honour" and financial stability.

"Trusted adults often become perpetrators, while families remain silent," allowing abuse to continue, often until it escalates, she said.

Nahin Zaman Moury, manager of advocacy at Breaking the Silence, who has been working in child protection in Cox's Bazar for nearly a decade, described similar barriers among low-income families.

A day labourer in Cox's Bazar owed Tk 200,000 to his eldest daughter's husband. When the son-in-law allegedly repeatedly sexually abused his younger sister-in-law, leaving her pregnant, he threatened immediate debt repayment and divorce if reported to police. The family remained silent.

In another case, a girl with a cognitive disability gave birth after repeated sexual abuse by her paternal uncle. His social standing and fears of retaliation prevented the family from reporting, Maury said.

EMERGENCY CALLS, WEAK RESPONSE

National Emergency Service 999 recorded reports of 176 child rapes, 107 attempted rapes, 127 domestic violence cases and 82 incidents of unusual sexual violence between January and September 2026.

In the past five years, the 1098 Child Helpline, under the Department of Social Services, logged 2.5 million calls -- 64,289 concerning violence against girls and 34,946 involving child-marriage prevention.

Chowdhury Md Mohaimen, manager at Bangladesh Child Helpline-1098, said that reporting child abuse remains severely constrained by restricted phone access for girls and widespread non-disclosure driven by social stigma.

Helpline records reflect this disparity, showing a higher volume of incoming calls from males (60pc) than females -- largely because adolescent girls rarely have personal access to mobile devices.

"Even when abuse is reported, intervention is hindered because our inter-agency coordination and referral mechanisms at the field level remain extremely weak," he said.

Although the Children Act 2013 mandates upazila-level Child Welfare Boards chaired by the UNO to handle local child protection, coordination among local administration, police, and social welfare officers remains largely unmonitored and fragmented, he noted, adding that there is no centralised state database to systematically track case resolutions across districts.

Furthermore, the Department of Social Services operates under acute field-level capacity constraints, employing approximately only one social worker for every 103,000 children in Bangladesh, making continuous case management and monitoring across upazilas exceptionally difficult, he added.

STRAINED SUPPORT SERVICES

Bangladesh's 14 One-Stop Crisis Centres (OCCs) at public medical college hospitals received 1,580 rape survivors aged 0-18 between January and September 2026, while its 67 district-level One-Stop Crisis Cells received 507.

Despite this steady influx of young survivors seeking care, the vast majority never enter the formal justice process. Of the 66,711 women and children supported across these centres up to July 2024, official records show that formal cases were filed in only 20,914 instances. OCC staff attribute this massive reporting gap to pervasive threats, intense family pressure, the absence of witnesses, and forced out-of-court settlements.

Compounding these operational hurdles, 373 personnel across OCCs, crisis cells, and the national DNA profiling laboratory -- including legal officers, psychological counsellors, and forensic technicians -- had gone unpaid since January 2026 amid administrative delays in transitioning to outsourced recruitment models.

DMCH OCC lawyer Fahmida Akter, observed that families frequently conceal abuse perpetrated within the home by close relatives, such as father, uncles or stepfathers, seeking only emergency medical treatment without registering a police case.

Furthermore, reporting delays combined with early family intervention severely compromise forensic proof.

"When families bathe the child or wash their clothes before arriving at the hospital, vital biological and DNA evidence is destroyed," Akter explained.

"While doctors may still identify physical trauma during medical examinations, the lack of matching DNA makes proving guilt beyond reasonable doubt exceptionally difficult in court."

SAFEGUARDS ON PAPER

Police Headquarters recorded 4,465 cases under the Nari O Shishu Nirjatan Daman Ain between January and August 2026, including 1,715 child-rape cases.

From Jan-Sept 2026, 14 OCCs and 67 district-level crisis cells received 2,087 child rape survivors aged 0–18. From Jan-Aug, 4,465 cases were filed under the Nari-O-Shishu Nirjatan Daman Act, including 1,715 child rapes.

SOURCES: **MoWCA, PHQ**

Highlighting major operational hurdles in child abuse investigations, Kamarum Munira, assistant inspector general (Media and Public Relations) at Police Headquarters, noted that delayed reporting often leads to evidence destruction when victims shower or wash clothes, while out-of-court compromises and a lack of neutral witnesses leave trials over-reliant on compromised forensic reports.

To address this, police operate Child Help Desks across 661 stations, instructing officers to gather verified forensic evidence, document statements meticulously, and protect threatened witnesses.

Yet a stark gap remains: a 2026 joint Supreme Court–BRAC study found investigations averaged 152.2 days -- far exceeding the 15-day limit -- with only 2.2 of 7.3 listed witnesses actually testifying.

JUSTICE DELAYED

The study examined 4,040 disposed cases across 32 districts. Of these, 1,193, or 29.55 percent, involved victims under 18, including girls as young as two.

Despite a 90-day statutory deadline for rape trials under the amended law, cases averaged 1,370 days, about 3.7 years, and 22 hearings.

Only 3 percent ended in convictions, against 70.2 percent acquittals and 13.4 percent compromises. Fifteen districts recorded no convictions among cases examined.

After charge-sheet submission, charge framing took another 346 days on average, followed by 963 days from charge framing to judgment.

"A judge cannot become a prosecutor," said Fowzul Azim, stressing that courts cannot build prosecution cases when investigators fail to collect evidence or prosecutors fail to produce key witnesses.

Investigation quality is therefore critical to convictions. But judicial neutrality should not mean passivity, he said.

Azim urged proactive case management, stricter limits on unnecessary adjournments, scheduled appearances of material witnesses and digital tracking of investigation deadlines, charge-sheet submissions, witness attendance, forensic reports and adjournment reasons to identify delays, alongside objective assessments of prosecutors.

THE MISSING LAYER

Child protection must extend beyond policing and criminal justice, said Laila Khondkar, convener of Shishurai Shob.

Citing international frameworks, she noted that specified professionals in Australia face mandatory obligations to report suspected abuse, while local authorities in England are legally required to make enquiries if a child faces significant harm.

Such systems, she explained, extend protection to risk assessments, case management, social-work interventions, and coordinated health and psychosocial services.

Pointing out that Bangladesh lacks an integrated protection system despite existing provisions under the Children Act 2013, Khondkar urged clearer reporting and referral mechanisms, specialised social workers, and inter-agency coordination among police, social welfare, health, education, and justice bodies.

A family's decision to compromise, she stressed, cannot absolve the state of its responsibility to protect the child.

BARRIERS AT EVERY STEP

Reporting: Poverty, pressure and intimidation silence families or force settlements.

Emergency response: Staff shortages and poor coordination delay protection.

Investigation: Takes 152 days on average against a 15-day deadline.

Trial: Takes 3.7 years on average; only 2.2 of 7.3 listed witnesses testify.

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SUPPLEMENT S3

The cost of keeping GIRLS IN SCHOOL

Poverty, distance, child marriage and social pressures combine to push them out of classrooms

TAMANNA YEASMIN MARIA

At 14, Sumi Rani should have been preparing for another year at school. Instead, marriage brought her childhood to an abrupt end.

Now 16, the girl from a remote char studied up to eighth grade. Reaching school meant walking, crossing a river by boat and travelling further. The crossing alone could take an hour.

Her mother said educating one child, including private tuition, coaching, notebooks, food and transport, cost Tk 4,000-5,000 monthly.

"Because of the distance and lack of money, we marry them off young," she said.

The Daily Star spoke to girls who had dropped out, their parents and teachers in Satkhira, Narail, Gazipur, Kurigram, Lalmonirhat, Rangpur, Patuakhali, Rajshahi and Dhaka's Korail, among other areas.

Their accounts point to poverty, child marriage, education and transport costs, distant schools, safety concerns, unwanted attention, social pressure, household responsibilities, adolescent relationships and declining interest in studies. Some girls also enter domestic work, factories and other low-wage jobs to support their families.

A BRAC project on out-of-school children identifies similar barriers, including inadequate school infrastructure, limited parental education and engagement, child labour, migration and environmental challenges. It warns that official dropout figures may overlook enrolled children effectively disengaged through irregular attendance or poor performance.

For Ayesha Akhter, now 16, school ended after eighth grade at 13 because her union had no secondary school.

"One option was four to five kilometres away, while another was 13-14 kilometres away and required a boat journey," said her father, Shafikul Islam.

Transport, food and other expenses cost around Tk 2,000 monthly, he said, adding that roads remained submerged for months during the monsoon.

Two years later, Ayesha was married off at 15, illustrating how dropping out can precede child marriage rather than result from it.

"When girls are not studying and just staying at home, people look at them differently," her father said, recalling local boys repeatedly asking for her phone number.

His younger daughter, now in eighth grade, wants to continue studying. "But I am unsure whether I can make that happen."

The BRAC project identified climate-vulnerable Kurigram, citing a 23.6 percent dropout rate from the Annual Sector Performance Report 2021. It also highlighted educational barriers in chars and other remote, climate-vulnerable areas.

CAMPE's Education Watch 2023 found families spent an average Tk 27,340 out of pocket on secondary education in 2022, particularly on private tutoring and commercial guidebooks.

A farmer, requesting anonymity, said he spends Tk 4,500-5,000 monthly on his daughter's SSC preparation.



PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

UNICEF found married girls in Bangladesh are more than four times as likely to be out of school than unmarried girls. BRAC also notes that dropout increases girls' vulnerability to early marriage, while boys may enter informal employment.

"The expenses include two private tuitions, school coaching and a tutor at home. I want her to complete the SSC," he said, adding that marriage might follow.

In Gazipur, a young labourer, also requesting anonymity, said he had four brothers and four sisters. While the brothers received some education, the sisters could not continue.

"Education costs a lot now, so my father couldn't afford to educate them," he said. His father, he said, has long been bedridden.

Another father, requesting anonymity, said financial hardship allowed him to educate his sons up to HSC but his daughter only up to SSC before marriage.

The BRAC project also identifies gender norms deprioritising girls' education, alongside early marriage and child labour.

Money, however, is not the only factor.

An 18-year-old Satkhira woman completed SSC before eloping with her partner. Now raising a six-month-old child, she wants to resume studying.

"My mother wants me to study, but my in-laws don't," she said, requesting anonymity.

Another woman, who left school after eighth grade and married around 16-17, cited financial difficulties, declining interest in education and her wish to marry.

UNICEF found married girls in Bangladesh are more than four times as likely to be out of school than unmarried girls. BRAC also notes that dropout increases girls' vulnerability to early marriage, while boys may enter informal employment.

Monir Hossain, principal of Mayer Doa School in Korail, said fee waivers alone cannot always prevent dropout.

"Some stay home to look after younger siblings so their mothers can work, while others take up paid work to support their families."

Shamshul Alom, a teacher from Gazipur, said excessive mobile-phone use and adolescent relationships affected some students' interest in education.

"Some girls were married off by their families, while others chose to marry their partners. Some later found work in factories, warehouses and hotels or as domestic workers."

The BBS-Unicef Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey 2025 found completion rates falling from 83.7 percent at primary level to 69.3 percent at lower-secondary and 43.9 percent at upper-secondary.

It found 47.2 percent of women aged 20-24 married before 18 and 13.4 percent before 15, down from 51.4 percent and 15.5 percent in 2019, respectively. Child labour affected 9.2 percent of children aged 5-17.

Mohammad Asif Ahmed, an information officer at the Ministry of Primary and Mass Education, said government dropout-prevention measures target both sexes rather than girls specifically.

These include primary-school stipends, free textbooks and mid-day meals, with plans for free uniforms, shoes and socks.

"Improving school facilities, including multimedia classrooms, is also part of efforts to increase attendance and prevent dropout."

Yet opportunities for those already out of school remain limited.

Devbrata Chakraborty, a director at the Bureau of Non-Formal Education, acknowledged limited government programmes for dropouts, particularly at upazila level.

The bureau offers pre-vocational training, generally for those aged 15-25, targeting at least 50 percent female participation, with 20 trainees per batch. Dropouts aged around 11-13 can take a bridge course leading to eighth-grade-equivalent certification.

According to Devbrata, early marriage complicates girls' return to education or training because of family responsibilities.

Several names have been withheld to protect interviewees' identities.

(Our Gazipur, Satkhira, Patuakhali, Rangpur and Rajshahi correspondents contributed to this report)



PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

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SUPPLEMENT S4



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Should period put A PERIOD ON CHILDHOOD?

NAZIBA BASHER

I got my first period when I was 11.

I remember being young enough to find it bewildering, but old enough to understand that something significant had happened. Today, 11 hardly seems exceptionally early.

Girls now begin puberty as early as eight. A 2024 Harvard TH Chan School of Public Health-led study of over 71,000 US participants found that the average age of first menstruation fell from 12.5 years among those born in 1950-1969 to 11.9 among those born in 2000-2005. Menstruation before age nine more than doubled, from 0.6 to 1.4 percent.

Eight. That number alone should make us reconsider how we talk about puberty.

In Bangladesh, when a girl begins menstruating or developing breasts, she often hears: "Boro hoye gechho" (You have grown up).

But an eight-year-old has not grown up. Neither has an 11-year-old.

What changes beyond her biology is how society perceives her. Menstruation becomes synonymous with "becoming a woman", bringing new expectations.

Sit properly. Cover your chest. Don't play with boys. Don't go out alone. Come home before dark. Watch how loudly you laugh.

Be careful, above all, of being seen.

Here lies one of girlhood's cruellest paradoxes: just when a child should be discovering the world, it begins closing in around her.

For boys, growing up often means greater independence. For girls, puberty can mean an expanding list of restrictions.

We call it protection, and the fear is not irrational. Girls face sexual harassment and violence, even as toddlers.

A Daily Star analysis of Ain o Salish Kendra data found that among girl children reported raped during January-August 2025, 20 percent were six or younger and another 39 percent were aged seven to 12. Reported rapes of girl children rose 83 percent in the first nine months, from 195 in 2024 to 357 in 2025.

The danger persists. In August this year alone, the Human Rights Support Society recorded 79 rape victims, including 46 children, and 93 women and girls subjected to sexual harassment, including 38 children.

Clearly, puberty is not what suddenly makes girls vulnerable.

So, what changes?

Too often, we begin transferring responsibility for navigating danger onto the girl herself. Previously, she needed protection. Now she receives instructions for protecting herself.

The threat is not new. Our expectations of her are.

Men may stare, so she must cover herself. Men may harass her, so she must stay indoors. Men may sexualise her body, so she must monitor it.

An astonishing burden for someone who may be eight.

Puberty should prompt conversations about menstruation, changing bodies, consent, boundaries, sexuality and safety, not teach girls that developing breasts makes them responsible for someone else's gaze.

Menstruation signals reproductive development, not emotional maturity. Girls deserve friendships with boys without adults sexualising those relationships, and public spaces without scrutiny.

Our conversations with boys must change too. Imagine investing as much energy in teaching boys that harassing girls is wrong as we invest in teaching girls to avoid male attention.

Every restriction imposed for a girl's "safety" raises questions: Safe from whom? And why is it her problem?

Restricting her instead of confronting threatening behaviour teaches her that freedom is negotiable.

We cannot spend her adolescence shrinking her world, then demand fearlessness and independence when she becomes an adult. We cannot tell her at nine that the street is not hers and expect her at 25 to stride confidently through it.

Childhood should not have a shorter expiry date for girls. Biology may determine when menstruation begins; it should not determine when childhood freedoms end.

As a girl grows, her world should be allowed to grow with it.

In Bangladesh, when a girl begins menstruating or developing breasts, she often hears: "Boro hoye gechho" (You have grown up). But an eight-year-old has not grown up. Neither has an 11-year-old. What changes beyond her biology is how society perceives her.



PHOTO: MAGNIFIC

Concept, Planning and Editing: **Naziba Basher,** *assistant news editor*