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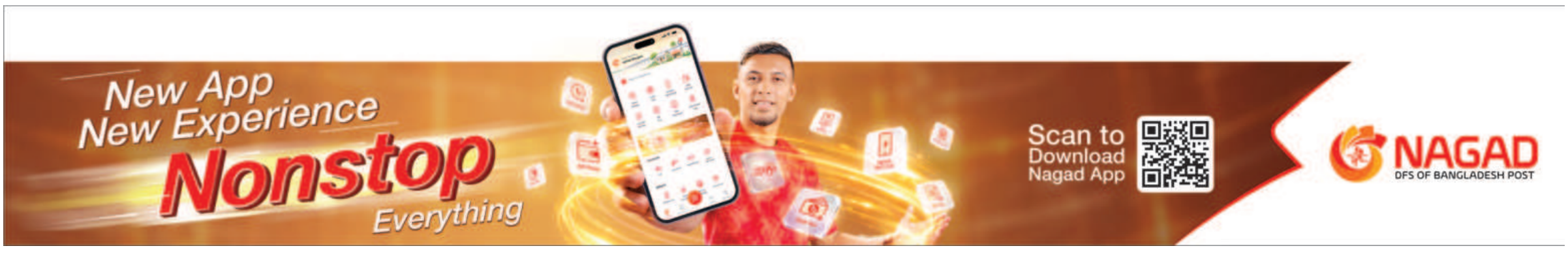
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"It's really bad people using AI, particularly in AI where you can take out all the safeguards."

Microsoft co-founder
BILL GATES





Saudi conflict risks another economic blow

TASNEEM TAYEB

The missile attacks by the Houthis on Saudi Arabia, the largest source of Bangladesh's remittance inflows and crude oil, pose another blow to the economy already reeling from the US-Israel war on Iran.

The kingdom hosts about 3.5 million Bangladeshis, who sent $1.95 billion in the first three months of the fiscal year, which is 19.2 percent of the total inflows, according to data from the Bangladesh Bank.

Last fiscal year, Bangladesh received about $5.85 billion from Saudi Arabia, which is about 16.4 percent of the total inflows, making it the largest source of remittance.

At a time when job creation at home remains bleak, Saudi Arabia's Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman's ambitions to transform Saudi Arabia from an insular, oil-dependent nation into a global hub for business and tourism offered a glimmer of hope to Bangladesh's vast unskilled labour.

For migrant workers who have strict deadlines to join work, a missed flight can be devastating by way of employment risk, visa validity and the cost of rearranging travel.

The kingdom remains the largest destination of manpower exports for Bangladesh, shows data from the Bureau of Manpower, Employment and Training. In September alone, Saudi Arabia issued clearances for 32,915 workers.

SEE PAGE 2 COL 4



PHOTO: **FIROZ AHMED**

Passengers travelling to Saudi Arabia arrive at Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport in Dhaka yesterday and learn about flight cancellations. Thousands gathered at the airport, unaware that their flights had been cancelled following attacks on airports in Saudi Arabia. Saudi authorities said Riyadh's King Khalid International Airport would remain closed until 2100 GMT on October 17 following a series of deadly attacks by Iran-aligned Houthis.

UP polls in 5 phases, likely from Jan 21

AHMED DEEPTO

The Election Commission and the government appear to be on the same page, at least regarding the timing of the union parishad elections.

After months of discussions about holding the local government polls in October or November, the EC announced November 12 as the tentative election date on September 14.

However, following the announcement, a cabinet member expressed reservations about the proposed date, saying it had been announced without consulting the government.

The EC then held an inter-ministerial meeting on September 17, at which top government officials said it would be better to conduct the polls from January.

Yesterday, the commission said it was now planning to begin the union parishad

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

Debt burden grows for rural poor

BIDS study says they spend over 40% of income on loan instalments

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Debt burdens among rural households, particularly the poorest, are growing heavier.

According to a study unveiled yesterday, 79 percent of the poorest families spend over 40 percent of their income repaying instalments on loans from microfinance institutions and local mohajons, or informal lenders.

The study by the Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies (BIDS) finds that 49 percent of the poorest people spent more than 40 percent of their income on loan instalments in 2010.

Overall, the share of borrowers who pay over 40 percent of their income in instalments increased from 22 percent in 2010 to 41 percent now, said BIDS Research Director Kazi Iqbal while presenting his research findings at a workshop at BIDS.

The research is titled "The Structural Transformation of Bangladesh's Rural Credit Market Since 2000: Evidence from Nationally Representative Surveys."

BIDS and the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) organised the event, where findings from other studies, were also presented.

"It means increased indebtedness for the poor and running into a cycle of debt," Iqbal said.

- Households with multiple loans rise from 27% to 33%
- NGOs account for three-fourths of rural loans
- MFI loans carry 27% effective interest rate
- Moneylenders charge 50-60% interest

SEE PAGE 2 COL 4



INDIAN VOTER LIST ROW

Opposition marches to SC against polls chief

INDIA bloc leaders file petition over SIR deletions

AGENCIES

Hundreds of opposition party demonstrators marched to India's Supreme Court yesterday to protest the removal of millions of names from voter lists that has sparked days of unrest in the Indian capital and challenged Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

Opposition parties and supporters of the "cockroach" youth movement have taken to the streets almost daily this month to demand the resignation of Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar over the revision that critics say benefits Modi's Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP).

Police detained thousands of

SEE PAGE 2 COL 1



Opposition parties march to the Supreme Court in New Delhi, India, yesterday, to protest against a controversial revision of voter lists that has sparked days of unrest. PHOTO: **REUTERS**

Man shot dead during BGB's anti-smuggling drive in M'singh

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Mymensingh*

A man shot dead when Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB) members fired "warning shots" during an anti-smuggling operation along the Haluaghat border in Mymensingh early yesterday, while a BGB member was assaulted by suspected smugglers.

The deceased, Ruman, 32, was of Betkuchi village in Haluaghat upazila, said Md Jalal Uddin, officer-in-charge (OC) of Haluaghat Police Station.

Based on a tip-off, a patrol team from Telikhali Border Outpost seized four cows in the Joljolia area around 5:45am, said Lt Col Md Nurul Azim Baizid, commanding officer of BGB-39 Mymensingh Battalion.

When the team was on their way back to the camp, a group of suspected smugglers armed with locally made weapons attacked them, he said.

SEE PAGE 8 COL 4



Solar-powered streetlights installed by Dhaka South City Corporation to save electricity are becoming dysfunctional due to a lack of maintenance and supervision. Several solar panels and lights near the Officers' Club on Bailey Road in Dhaka have stopped working.

PHOTO: **PALASH KHAN**

Ex-army officers on 4-day remand in sedition case

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday placed two retired army officers on a four-day remand in a sedition case.

Dhaka Metropolitan Magistrate Didarul Alam passed the order after the Detective Branch (DB) of Dhaka Metropolitan Police produced Lt (retd) Kazi Gulshan Ara and Lt Col (retd) Debashish before the court with a seven-day remand prayer, said Additional Public Prosecutor Muhammad Shamsud Doha Sumon.

According to a forwarding report submitted to the court, the two accused and their associates had been collecting funds for anti-government activities and creating and disseminating violent and provocative digital content on various social media platforms.

Through platforms named "Unity Care" and "Public Parliament", formed by a group of retired army officers, the accused allegedly maintained contact with former army chief General (retd) Aziz Ahmed, a former home minister and fugitive senior leaders, and conspired to rehabilitate the Awami League, whose activities are currently banned, and commit organised crimes against the state, the report said.

The accused had also allegedly been trying to destabilise the country by creating content inciting violence and unrest through a page named "KalAjKal.com".

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253 women, girls raped in three months

HRSS also reports political violence, custodial deaths, journo attacks during July-Sept

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Violence against women and children remained a major human rights concern in Bangladesh during July-September, according to a quarterly report by rights body Human Rights Support Society (HRSS).

Released yesterday, the report, based on reports published in 16 national newspapers, HRSS-collected information and fact-finding reports, recorded 783 women and girls subjected to violence and 733 children subjected to abuse.

At least 253 women and girls were raped, including 154 minors. Forty-two were gang-raped, 12 were killed after being raped and one died by suicide. Another 220, including 103 children, faced sexual harassment.

Dowry-related violence left 13 women dead and 17 injured, while two others died by suicide. Domestic violence left 137 women dead and 68 injured, while 72 others died by suicide.

Of the 733 children, 189 died and 544 suffered physical or psychological abuse. The report did not specify the circumstances of their deaths.

Political violence left 17 people dead and 1,227 injured in 183 incidents, including 161 involving internal BNP conflicts or clashes with other political groups.

Internal BNP conflicts accounted for 69 incidents, leaving nine dead and at least 540 injured. Another 31 clashes between the BNP and Jamaat-e-Islami left one dead and 338 injured.

HRSS attributed the violence to political rivalry, internal party disputes, disputes over control of land and businesses, and extortion.

Mob violence and lynching left 54 people dead and 145 injured in 137 incidents linked to allegations of theft, robbery, religious insult, rape and attempted rape, as well as other disputes.

At least 37 people died in prisons, including 14 convicted prisoners and 23 awaiting trial. Six others died in law enforcement custody or allegedly due to torture.

The report also documented 88 incidents of assault or harassment involving 135 journalists. Of them, 63 were injured, 27 humiliated, 18 threatened and nine detained.

Law enforcers allegedly obstructed 18 meetings and rallies, leaving 128 people injured and eight detained.

Labour-related abuse left 71 workers dead and at least 260 injured in 251 incidents. Separately, 164 workers died in workplace accidents, which HRSS attributed to unsafe working conditions and inadequate protective equipment.

One domestic worker was murdered, three died under mysterious circumstances and three were subjected to abuse. All but two of the victims were children or adolescents.

Six attacks on minority communities left six people injured and involved attacks on or vandalism of two temples, five idols and four homes.

HRSS Executive Director Izazul Islam called for coordinated efforts by the state and society to strengthen the rule of law and urged the government to take effective measures to prevent violence against women and children, political and mob violence, attacks on journalists and minorities, unsafe working conditions, and deaths in custody and prisons.

MONGLA PORT MODERNISATION

Bangladesh signs $335.78m Chinese loan

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh yesterday signed a $335.78 million loan agreement with China's Export-Import Bank to expand and modernise Mongla Port, including the construction of two container terminals equipped with modern machinery.

The loan agreement, worth RMB 2.404 billion or Tk 3,592.90 crore, was signed yesterday, according to a press release issued by the Economic Relations Division (ERD) of the Ministry of Finance.

Under the project, the Mongla Port Authority will construct two container terminals, a container yard, a container delivery yard and a cargo handling yard. The port will also undergo necessary modernisation.

The Chinese government has confirmed concessional financing for the project at an interest rate of 2%, according to the agreement.



FILE PHOTO

The loan will have a repayment period of 20 years, including a five-year grace period.

Alia Meher, joint secretary of the ERD, signed the agreement on behalf of the Bangladesh government, while Fengjun Tian, assistant general manager of China's EXIM Bank, signed on behalf of the Chinese side.

Saudi conflict risks another economic blow

FROM PAGE 1

But the Iran-backed Houthis' attacks now are testing Salman's multitrillion-dollar drive to remake the Saudi economy.

If the strikes on vital Saudi infrastructure seen in recent days continue for long, it spells bad news for Bangladesh's migrant workers and the inflow of remittance, one of the two pillars of the economy.

It could reduce employment opportunities and eventually force migrant workers to return, said Hossain Zillur Rahman, executive chairman of the Power and Participation Research Centre.

Even then, scores of Bangladesh's migrant workers are in an agonising state of suspense after the kingdom's civil aviation authorities suspended flight operations from Riyadh's King Khalid International Airport until October 17 and are running Dammam's King Fahd International Airport at limited capacity.

Restrictions on flight operations at Saudi Arabian airports have affected 61 flights, including 22 direct and 39 transit services, impacting at least 8,381 passengers, according to the latest figures from the Civil Aviation Authority of Bangladesh.

For migrant workers who have strict deadlines to join work, a missed flight can be devastating by way of employment risk, visa validity and the cost of rearranging travel.

So far, remittance has not been impacted, but if the conflict prolongs, it can.

Shama Obaed Islam, state minister for foreign affairs, warned of possible consequences for remittance from the escalating Middle East conflict.

The government is exploring new overseas employment markets and opportunities for returning workers, she told the media yesterday.

The immediate priority should be the safety of Bangladeshis in the region, Zillur said.

Other than remittances, Saudi Arabia accounts for roughly 35 percent of Bangladesh's crude oil imports.

Two Bangladeshis were killed and 27 others injured after a missile strike on the Riyadh airport on Saturday. At least 13 people were killed and more than 300 others injured in the attack.

Of the wounded, 15 are undergoing treatment at hospitals, according to the Bangladesh Embassy in Riyadh.

Five were initially in critical condition, but four are now out of danger. Only Saffat Rahman, who arrived on an Umrah visa, remains critical, said the report signed by embassy Counsellor Muhammad Reza-e-Rabbi.

The remaining 12 injured workers were released after primary treatment.

The embassy said it is monitoring the situation and stands ready to provide emergency assistance.

It also urged Bangladeshis in Saudi Arabia to remain vigilant, avoid risky and crowded places, and comply with instructions from Saudi authorities.

The embassy also warned that collecting, sharing or publishing conflict-related photographs, videos and information on social media could constitute a punishable offence under the Saudi law, and advised expatriates against storing or exchanging such material on their phones.

Former ambassador M Humayun Kabir, also the president of the Bangladesh Enterprise Institute, called for balanced engagement with the parties involved, stressing that Bangladesh should protect its national interests without unnecessarily alienating important partners.

"The conflict has placed Bangladesh in a diplomatically difficult position," he said.

UP polls in 5 phases, likely from Jan 21

FROM PAGE 1

polls in the third week of January.

Asked whether the EC had discussed the election dates with the government, Election Commissioner Abul Fazal Md Sanaullah said the commission had met representatives of all government departments on September 17.

"After the meeting and completion of the desk work, we are announcing the election date," he said.

The commissioner said the polls would be held in five phases on January 21, February 4, April 29, May 13, and May 27.

Sanaullah said all five polling dates fall on Thursdays.

The EC will announce the election schedules around six weeks before the respective polling dates, he said while briefing the media.

The schedules may be announced 42 days before an election, but this could vary from 38 to 45 days, the commissioner said, adding that the number of phases had been reduced from seven to five due to time constraints.

The EC plans to hold the polls simultaneously across all districts, prioritising Sadar upazilas and union parishads whose terms have expired.

Bangladesh has 4,580 union parishads, and EC data shows that 3,975 of them will be eligible for elections by December.

Sanaullah said the EC had initially tried to hold the polls before January 21 but adjusted its plans following a request from the organisers of Biswa Ijtema concerning the date of Akheri Munajat (final prayers).

Responding to a question, he said the commission would hold a separate meeting with law enforcement agencies to discuss their preparedness for the local government elections.

"Their representatives were present at the meeting [on September 17]. At the time, we were informed that they would complete their training activities by November."

Regarding the deployment of army personnel during the local body polls, Sanaullah said similar concerns had been raised ahead of the national polls, which he described as among the most peaceful elections.

Expressing hope that the UP elections would be free of violence and calling for support from all relevant stakeholders, the commissioner said the EC sought to uphold the culture of good elections.

Opposition marches to SC against polls chief

FROM PAGE 1

protesters over the weekend, including leaders of the 'Cockroach Janta Party' (CJP), as supporters of the youth movement sought to march in protest and were stopped by thousands of security personnel who locked down central Delhi.

Opposition parties yesterday marched to the top court to file a petition over the voter list revision after Chief Justice Surya Kant declined their request for a meeting. Kant said the issues were already before the court and discussing pending cases would violate judicial ethics and propriety, and suggested the opposition file a petition instead.

Hundreds of people, including opposition party members and left-wing student groups, marched to the court, while leaders travelled by bus.

While the INDIA bloc march to the top court, led by Congress leader Rahul Gandhi, was stopped on Bhagwan Das Road, Gandhi and other bloc leaders reached the court in the evening, where his legal team completed the formalities for filing a petition against the Election Commission over alleged voter deletions and irregularities in the Special Intensive Revision (SIR).

Cockroach Janta Party (CJP) leaders, including Saurav Das and Ashutosh Ranka, visited the Parliament Street Police Station yesterday to seek a date for a peaceful protest at Jantar Mantar against chief election commissioner. The CJP has also given the Delhi Police 24 hours to provide a date to hold a protest at Jantar Mantar.

Earlier, Delhi police announced that Jantar Mantar in the central business district was no longer designated as an official protest site and three new venues had been identified, according to an official order seen by Reuters.

Authorities closed six metro stations for 10 hours and restricted traffic along over 20 stretches in anticipation of the demonstration. Hundreds of security personnel in anti-riot gear were also deployed in central Delhi, with key roads barricaded and water cannons on standby.

The ruling BJP said the protests were the main opposition Congress party's attempt to seize power.

"By discrediting constitutional institutions, spreading chaos and riots on the streets, and attacking people in the name of politics, all it seeks is a return to power," Agriculture Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan told reporters.

Opposition parties allege Muslim voters and other minorities, who are unlikely to support the Hindu nationalist ruling party, are disproportionately affected by the deletions – charges both the poll panel and BJP reject.

"The fundamental values of this country are being assaulted, institutions are losing their independence...I am here to protest against this assault," said Anirudh Siyag, a PhD student who joined the protest.

Debt burden grows for rural poor

FROM PAGE 1

The research finds that the share of households with two or more loans increased from 27 percent to 33 percent since 2010. It did not examine the reasons behind the growing debt burden.

According to the report, NGO microfinance institutions (MFIs) now account for three out of every four rural loans, making them the dominant source of credit in rural areas.

However, wider access to loans has coincided with a growing repayment burden, particularly among poorer households.

Despite an increase in the number of lenders, interest rates have remained largely unchanged over the past decade.

The effective interest rate on loans provided by MFIs stands at 27 percent, while banks charge around 10 percent interest and MFIs charge a flat rate of 15 percent. Moneylenders charge between 50 and 60 percent.

The BIDS research director said competition could not bring down the effective interest rates charged by MFIs.

"This is because there is a huge demand for credit at the current high rates," he said, adding that a push from the regulator, the Microcredit Regulatory Authority (MRA), was needed to cut borrowing costs.

Large and national-level NGOs are also better positioned to cut interest rates, he said.

The BIDS study also finds that agriculture's share of total rural borrowing fell from 25 percent to 16 percent, reflecting broader structural changes in the economy.

Agricultural loans are mainly used to buy fertiliser, seeds, and livestock and to meet cash expenses for land leasing, rather than to purchase agricultural machinery.

Farmers who rent land through cash payments and those who cultivate under sharecropping arrangements borrow the most. Access to bank loans, however, depends on land ownership.

Another study by IFPRI, presented at the workshop, finds that banks finance only 2-7 percent of machinery purchases.

Among combine harvester owners, just 5 percent used bank loans to buy their machines. Around 32 percent borrowed money from relatives, 27 percent from microfinance institutions or NGOs, and 8 percent from moneylenders.

The study says dealers remain the main source of machinery financing, covering an average of 57 percent of a combine harvester's net price, usually with repayment over 18 months. A signed blank cheque is often taken as security.

It says the costs of repairing machinery create further financial pressure. Over one-third of combine harvester owners borrow to cover repairs, mainly from relatives and moneylenders, and nearly half of those repair loans remain unpaid.

The report says about 64 percent of combine harvester owners' income comes between April and June, leaving them facing cash shortages during the remaining nine months of the year.

The researchers recommend machinery-backed loans, seasonal repayment schedules, and hire-purchase financing with terms of at least three years.

They also call for changes to agricultural credit rules that exclude machinery services provided on other people's land from recognised agricultural activity.

Another IFPRI study, conducted with WeGro, examined whether sharing business risks could encourage livestock investment.

Under the profit-sharing arrangement, WeGro financed cattle purchases and received one-third of the profit after sale, while farmers kept two-thirds. Farmers owed nothing to WeGro if there was no profit.

Agriculture Secretary Md Salim Khan, MRA Executive Vice-Chairman Prof Mohammed Helal Uddin, and Palli Karma-Sahayak Foundation Managing Director Md Fazlul Kader were present at the event, which was chaired by BIDS Director General Prof AK Enamul Haque.

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



Rights, security for all, regardless of faith: PM

BSS, *Dhaka*

The government is committed to ensuring the rights and security of every citizen, regardless of religious identity, said Prime Minister Tarique Rahman yesterday.

Everyone should be treated equally as a citizen of Bangladesh, he said while exchanging views with Hindu community leaders from the Dhaka-17 constituency at his office at the Bangladesh Secretariat, said PM's Deputy Press Secretary Hasan Shiplu.

Representatives of eight temples met him to invite him to attend the Durga Puja celebrations.

Thanking the leaders for acknowledging the government's initiatives for the Hindu community, including extended Puja holidays and increased grants, Tarique said the steps taken so far reflected the government's goodwill and that efforts were under way to address other issues.



Visitors admire a painting at "Durga Through the Eyes of Artists -- Shakti", an art exhibition at Gallery Chitrak in the capital's Dhanmondi. Featuring works by young and senior Bangladeshi artists, the exhibition explored Goddess Durga, power and the spirit of Sharadiya Durga Puja. It ended yesterday.

PHOTO: **MEHEDI HASAN**

IN FOCUS

GRAMEEN KALYAN

HC clears way for NBR to recover Tk 666cr in tax

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday released the full verdicts rejecting two petitions filed by Grameen Kalyan against the National Board of Revenue (NBR) orders reassessing its income tax at around Tk 666 crore, clearing the way for the tax authorities to recover the dues.

Grameen Kalyan is a non-profit charitable organisation founded by former interim government chief adviser and Nobel laureate Professor Muhammad Yunus.

"The respondents (NBR chairman and other officials concerned) are directed to take necessary steps to realize the unpaid tax from the petitioner in accordance with law as expeditiously as possible. Let a copy of this judgment and order be communicated to the respondents forthwith," the bench of Justice Md Mozibur Rahman Miah and Justice Rezaul Karim said in one of the full texts of judgments.

In another verdict, the same bench said, "The respondents are directed to do the needful relating to the unpaid tax from the petitioner by issuing necessary demand notice immediately. Let a copy

SEE PAGE 9 COL 6

Childhood behind bars

300 children living in prisons with jailed mothers; social services dept recommends alternative care

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Around 300 children are currently living with their incarcerated mothers in prisons across the country, prompting the Department of Social Services to recommend alternative family-based care or placement in government children's homes to ensure their safety and development.

The recommendations were made in a report jointly prepared by the department's Child Protection Unit and Probation Section for submission to the High Court, in compliance with its directive.



"According to the latest information received from the field level, around 298 to 303 children are currently staying with their incarcerated mothers in prisons across Bangladesh. Under the supervision of probation officers, the Association for Correction and Rehabilitation of Offenders regularly provides toys, clothing and nutritious food to these children to support their early development and ensure their protection," the report said.

The department, under the Ministry of Social Welfare, said prisons were not conducive to children's long-term physical and mental development.

SEE PAGE 9 COL 1

Dengue cases cross 1 lakh, deaths reach 307

Dengue cases may stay high through November | Cases may decline in Dec if rainfall subsides | Experts raise concerns over underreporting | Poor surveillance hampers mosquito control | DNCC identifies 100 dengue hotspots

HELEMUL ALAM

With 2,167 new dengue cases reported yesterday, the total caseload this year has reached 1,01,442, while the death toll stands at 307.

Experts warned that cases could remain high through November before declining in December if rainfall subsides. They called for sustained mosquito control, accurate reporting and coordinated action to contain the outbreak.

Prof Kabirul Bashar, an entomologist at Jahangirnagar University, said cases might decline slightly in November but were unlikely to fall enough to indicate a clear downward trend. A more noticeable decline could begin in December, but continued rainfall could prolong the outbreak, he said.

Citing a forecasting model, he said dengue cases could continue rising for up to six weeks after the last rainfall.

Bashar also raised concerns about underreporting, alleging that some major hospitals were reporting zero dengue patients despite indications that patients were being treated there.

He urged journalists to independently verify hospital figures, warning that inaccurate reporting could prevent authorities from identifying hotspots and allocating resources effectively.

GM Saifur Rahman, an entomologist at National University, called for a coordinated, year-round, science-based strategy to identify and eliminate breeding sites.

Rahman urged authorities to launch full-scale preventive measures once cases decline after November to reduce the risk of another surge next year.

He said effective interventions could eliminate an estimated 75% of breeding sites, depending on implementation and coverage.

Rahman stressed the need for cooperation among government agencies, city corporations, NGOs and research institutions to coordinate activities, evaluate programmes and ensure follow-up monitoring. He also called for field-based training and public awareness campaigns.

"Simply pouring out standing water may not be enough, as eggs can remain attached to container surfaces. People should know how to clean, treat or properly dispose of potential breeding sites," he added.

Dhaka North City Corporation Chief Health Officer Brig Gen Imrul-al-Quais said the corporation had identified 100 hotspots, deployed around 100 volunteers daily and collected data directly from hospitals and patients' households.

He said the DNCC was prioritising the elimination of breeding sites, mosquito surveillance and patient tracking rather than relying solely on insecticide spraying.

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SONALI BAG

Govt hands over unused machinery to MBSTU

Project scrapped last year over high costs

HELEMUL ALAM

The government has transferred the unused machinery from the Sonali Bag project to Mawlana Bhashani Science and Technology University (MBSTU) to prevent public assets from deteriorating and support further research into jute-based products and technologies.

A memorandum of understanding was signed on October 8 among the Bangladesh Jute Mills Corporation (BJMC), the Bangladesh Climate Change Trust and the university.

State Minister for Textiles and Jute Shariful Alam

SEE PAGE 9 COL 3

'I recognised my son by his clothes'

Mother tells ICT how she found him among piles of bodies

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A mother searched floor after floor of Dhaka Medical College Hospital for her son, Mohammad Ismail, after learning he had been shot during a protest in the July uprising. She eventually found him dead in a morgue crowded with 300 to 400 bodies piled on top of one another.

"I recognised my son by the clothes he was wearing," Taslima Akter told International Crimes Tribunal-1 yesterday, breaking down in tears as she recounted finding his body.

Ismail was shot dead in Mohammadpur on July 19, according to her testimony in a crimes against humanity case against former Dhaka South City Corporation mayor Sheikh Fazle Noor Taposh, former minister Jahangir Kabir Nanak and 26 others over the killings of nine people, including Ismail and another student.

Taslima said her son joined the movement near Allah Karim Mosque that day.

That evening, Ismail's friend Kalu informed his aunt that he had been shot and was being taken to DMCH.

Taslima, with her mother and sister, left their home in Dhaka Udyan by rickshaw and reached the hospital around 10:00pm.

The emergency department was crowded with gunshot victims, both alive and dead.

SEE PAGE 9 COL 5



Farmers have set up a market for early winter vegetables in a field beside Bargachhi Union Parishad in Paba upazila, Rajshahi. Cauliflowers are selling for Tk 1,700-1,900 per maund, bottle gourds for Tk 10-12 each and radishes for Tk 600-700 per maund. Wholesalers have to spend an additional Tk 10 per kg to transport the vegetables to Dhaka, Chattogram and Sylhet. Despite reasonable wholesale prices, vegetables remain expensive in retail markets. The photo was taken recently.

PHOTO: **AZAHAR UDDIN**

GM Quader's Uttara residence attacked

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A group of people attacked the residence of Jatiya Party Chairman GM Quader in Uttara's Sector 7 in Dhaka yesterday morning.

Around 10:45am, they gathered outside the house carrying a banner reading "Anti-Autocracy General Public".

They demanded Quader's arrest, accusing him of being an Indian agent, an aide to ousted prime minister Sheikh Hasina and a betrayer of the July martyrs.

Speaking to The Daily Star, Quader said he and his wife were having breakfast when they heard shouting outside, followed by bricks and stones being thrown at the house from different directions.

The attack shattered windowpanes, scattering broken glass across the drawing room. However, the attackers could not enter the house as the gate was locked, he said.

"They remained there for around half an hour. I informed the police, who rushed to the spot," Quader said, adding that the attackers hurled abuses at him and chanted slogans branding him an Indian agent.

Uttara West Police Station Officer-in-Charge Khalid Mansur said police received information about the attack around 11:00am and rushed to the spot.

Around 30-40 people threw bricks at the house and vandalised it from outside before fleeing upon seeing the police, he said.

EXTORTION THREAT

Bus services halted on Bandarban-Thanchi road

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Bandarban*

Bus services on the Bandarban-Thanchi road have remained suspended for two days amid allegations of extortion demands by an armed group.

Mohammad Nurul Alam, general secretary of the Bandarban-Thanchi Bus Owners' Association, alleged that an armed outfit threatened to abduct drivers if buses run on the route.

"In view of the security risks, bus services on the route have been suspended," he said.

Meanwhile, passengers faced difficulties to commute. They were forced to hire local jeeps, known as "Chander Gari", or motorcycles at inflated fares to reach their destinations.

Bandarban Superintendent of Police Md Wahabul Islam Khandaker said they were investigating the matter to identify those involved.

NCT deal sparks fresh protest at Ctg port

Over 100 activists go on hunger strike

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, *Ctg*

Activists of Chattogram Bandar Jatiyatabadi Sramik Dal and Bandar Rokkha Sangram Parishad began a daylong hunger strike yesterday, demanding cancellation of the 15-year deal with UAE-based DP World to operate the New Mooring Container Terminal (NCT).

More than 100 leaders and activists began the strike in front of the port's One Stop Service Building around 11:30am.

Activists from different political and workers' organisations under the Chattogram Bandar Rokkha Committee also joined the programme.

On Thursday, the Chittagong Port Authority signed a 15-year agreement with DP World for the operation and maintenance of the terminal. The agreement was signed at the Invest Bangladesh auditorium in Dhaka.

Port workers and their supporters have long opposed the proposed deal, holding rallies, human chains, torch processions and other programmes demanding its cancellation.



PHOTO: COLLECTED

More than 100 leaders and activists began the strike in front of the port's One Stop Service Building around 11:30am yesterday.

Humayun Kabir, a coordinator of the Bandar Rokkha Sangram Parishad, claimed that no invitation for talks had come from the government yet.

The women behind Durga idols

Women artisans in Habiganj's Paulpara carry on century-old tradition of idol-making

MINTU DESHWARA, *from Habiganj*

Women artisans in Paulpara village of Habiganj's Lakhai upazila have been making clay idols of Goddess Durga for generations, carrying on a tradition dating back more than a century.

While idol-making has traditionally been dominated by men, women in this haor village play a central role in the craft.

Men generally build the bamboo-and-straw skeletons, while women apply clay, sculpt, paint and decorate the idols, locals said.

Niyati Rani Paul, who is currently making six Durga idols in her courtyard, said she had received orders from seven areas this year and began work several months ago.

"I learnt the craft from my husband after marriage, around 22 years ago, and have since gradually developed my skills by working for years to make clay idols ahead of Durga and Kali pujas," she said.

As her reputation grew, she began receiving orders from different areas.

Niyati said completing an idol takes five to seven days of continuous work.

Other women involved in idol-making include Mira, Nepal, Pratima Paul, Pramila Paul, Kajol Paul and Sita Paul.

Pramila Paul, 65, said families in the village had practised the craft for generations but received no institutional, financial or government support.



A village artisan in Paulpara moulds clay into a goddess idol as preparations for the upcoming Durga Puja. PHOTO: STAR

She also called for better road connectivity, saying poor transport facilities make it difficult to bring in raw materials and deliver finished idols.

Gobinda Paul, who inherited the craft from his forefathers, said his family makes clay pots and household utensils throughout the year, while idol-making provides additional income during Durga Puja.

"It is impossible to do all the work alone, so the women in our family have stepped in to help," he said.

Pranesh Bhattacharya, president of the Lakhai Puja Udjapan Parishad, said idol-making was a tradition in almost every household in Paulpara.

He said the artisans' craftsmanship and relatively low prices attract orders from neighbouring areas, including Brahmanbaria, Narsingdi, Bahubal, Madhabpur and parts of Sunamganj.

Contacted, Habiganj Deputy Commissioner Dr AKM Sharfaraz said the administration would look into the matter and take necessary initiatives to support the artisans.

Cox's Bazar int'l airport launch pushed to November

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government plans to inaugurate Cox's Bazar International Airport in November, revising its earlier October target, Civil Aviation and Tourism Minister M Rashiduzzaman Millat said yesterday.

"Preparations are underway to inaugurate the international airport in November," he said at a meeting with domestic and foreign airline representatives at the ministry in Dhaka, according to a press release.

Speaking to reporters at the Secretariat earlier, he said the ministry hoped to secure Prime Minister Tarique Rahman's schedule for the first week of November. The inauguration date would be announced once the schedule was confirmed, reports BSS.

Bangladesh Satellite Company Limited
'Connecting Worlds for Enriching Lives'
116 Kazi Nazrul Islam Avenue, Dhaka-1000
www.bscl.gov.bd

e-Tender Notice

e-Tender is invited in the National e-GP system portal (https://www.eprocure.gov.bd/) for the procurement of the following services:

S/N	Tender ID	Tender Name	Package No:	Tender Publication Date and time	Tender Document last selling Date and time	Tender Closing & Opening Date and time
01.	1322166	Supply of Battery for Online UPS, Generator and Substation	14.39.0000.000.012.07.0003.26.212(T)	13-Oct-2026 Time: 10:00(A.M)	28-Oct-2026 Time: 16:00(P.M)	29-Oct-2026 Time: 16:00(P.M)
02.	1322326	Procurement of Refreshment Items for BSCL (Framework Contract)	14.39.0000.000.012.07.0010.26.211(T)	13-Oct-2026 Time: 10:00(A.M)	28-Oct-2026 Time: 16:00(P.M)	29-Oct-2026 Time: 16:00(P.M)
03.	1331960	Procurement of AMC for Air Conditioner (AC) Repair and Maintenance	14.39.0000.000.012.07.0005.26.215(T)	13-Oct-2026 Time: 10:00(A.M)	28-Oct-2026 Time: 16:00(P.M)	29-Oct-2026 Time: 16:00(P.M)

This is an Online Tender, where only e-Tender will be accepted in the National e-GP Portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted. To submit e-Tender registration in the National e-GP system Portal (http://www.eprocure.gov.bd) is required. The fees for downloading the e-Tender Documents from National e-GP System Portal have to be deposited online through any registered Bank's branches. Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP system Portal and from e-GP help desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd).

(Signed)
Md. Golam Sarowar
General Manager (Admin & Procurement)
Bangladesh Satellite Company Limited.

GD- 2483

INDEPENDENT UNIVERSITY, BANGLADESH
Purchase & Procurement Department
Plot 16, Block B, Aftabuddin Ahmed Road, Bashundhara Residential Area, Dhaka 1245
Hotline: 09612 939393, Extention: 1652 and 1654

TENDER FOR BRAND NEW COASTER & HIGH-ROOF MICROBUS

Independent University, Bangladesh (IUB) invites sealed quotations from the authorized distributors/dealers for the supply of the following brand new vehicles:

1. One brand new AC coaster: Any brand, Model Year 2025/2026, engine capacity 4,150-4,350 CC, seating capacity 30 persons (including the driver), with an efficient air-conditioning system.

2. One brand new AC high-roof microbus: Any brand, Model Year 2025/2026, engine capacity 2,450-2,750 CC, seating capacity 16 persons (including the driver), with an efficient air-conditioning system.

Detailed specifications and other terms and conditions are provided in the tender schedule. Interested bidders may purchase the tender schedule from the Purchase & Procurement Department, Admin Building, Level 1, Room No. 2031, upon cash payment of Tk. 1,000/- (non-refundable) to the Finance & Accounts Department during office hours (9:30 AM to 4:00 PM, Sunday through Thursday) **until October 19, 2026.**

Bidders shall submit their technical and financial bids in two separate sealed envelopes to the Purchase & Procurement Department **at any time before the deadline, but not later than 2:00 PM on October 25, 2026**. The financial bid must accompany an earnest money equivalent to 2.5% of the quoted value in the form of a Pay Order or Bank Draft issued by any scheduled bank in favor of Independent University, Bangladesh. The University Authority reserves the right to accept or reject any or all bids without assigning any reason whatsoever.

BIRDEM GENERAL HOSPITAL
(An Enterprise of Diabetic Association of Bangladesh)
122, Kazi Nazrul Islam Avenue, Shahbag, Dhaka-1000, Bangladesh.
☎: 41060501-24, Fax: 41060476
E-mail: birdemprocurements@gmail.com

Invitation for Enlistment of Suppliers for 1250KVA Dry Type Transformer & Renewal / New Suppliers Enlistment for MSR, Electric, Civil & Others

Reference No : BIRDEM/Purchase/ Supplier Enlistment /Transformer /2026/09, Dated: 12th October 2026
Organization: BIRDEM
Address: 122, Kazi Nazrul Islam Avenue, Shahbag, Dhaka-1000.
A) Enlistment of Suppliers / Contractors for Supply & Installation of New Dry Type 1250 KVA Transformer with total 1500 KW (Old 1000 and new 500) Load Sanction at 11 KV/ 440 Volt Indoor Sub-Station, BIRDEM .

1. Scope of Work Requirements :
- Item: New Dry Type 1250 KVA Transformer with total 1500 KW (Old 1000 and new 500) Load Sanction.
- Associated Work: Installation and Commissioning Work.
- Quality & Compliance: As per Schedule.

2. Eligibility Criteria for Suppliers :
- Business Status: DPDC Enlistment Electric Contractor / Supplier.
- Experience: Minimum 5 (five) years in Sub-Station Work.
- Mandatory Documents:
  a) Two copies of recently taken passport-sized photo.
  b) Attested copy of the National Identity Card, Trade License, Income TAX Certificate, and Bank Solvency Certificate & Statement.
  c) Updated TIN, BIN, TAX and ABC License from Electric License Board.

3. Clarification of Contractor Enlistment Fee (Per Application):

Type	Qualification	Enlistment Fee (Tk)	VAT (15%) Tk	Total Fee (Tk)
Supplier for 1250 KVA Dry Type Transformer	DPDC Enlisted, Electric Supplier/ Contractor	5000/-	750/-	5750/-

B) Renewal / New Suppliers Enlistment for MSR, Electric, Civil & Others:
- Clarification of Contractor Renewal Fee / New Suppliers Application Form Fee (Per Application):

Sl. No.	Type	Renewal Fee	VAT 15% (Tk)	Total Fee (Tk)	Price of New Application Form (Tk)
1.	MSR	5000/-	750/-	5750/-	500/-
2.	Electric	5000/-	750/-	5750/-	500/-
3.	Civil	5000/-	750/-	5750/-	500/-
4.	Others	5000/-	750/-	5750/-	500/-

4. Submission Details:
- Date of selling of application form documents: Tender /Enlistment Documents Collection will be available from 15th October 2026 to 11th November 2026 on all working days (9:00 am to 01:00 pm).
- Address: Procurement Section (Room No: 230, 1st floor of OPD Building, BIRDEM)
- Submission Deadline : 12th November 2026 (Office Hour 8:00am to 2:00pm)
- Supplier are requested to submit separate sealed envelopes (For A & B)

5. The Procuring Entity reserves the right to accept or reject any or all enlisted suppliers.

6. For Details Please See the following website address:
www.birdembd.org,
www.dab-bd.org

Farzana Ibrahim
Dr. Farzana B Ibrahim
Joint Director (Hospital Administration)
BIRDEM General Hospital

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Bangladesh Road Transport Authority (BRTA)
BRTA Bhaban, New Airport Road, Banani, Dhaka-1212.
www.brta.gov.bd

e-Tender Notice: OTM

Ref No: 35.03.0000.000.001.07.0032.26-2106 Date: 12 October 2026

An e-Tender has been invited in e-GP system national portal (https://www.eprocure.gov.bd) for the procurement of the following goods and related services by Director (Administration), Bangladesh Road Transport Authority (BRTA), BRTA HQ, Chairmanbari, Banani, Dhaka-1212.

SL No	Tender ID	Description	Tender Publication date & Time	Tender Document Last Selling date & time	Tender Closing/ Opening date & time
01	1347257	Supply, Installation, Commissioning and Maintenance of a Modern Central Control Room, Including Necessary Equipment and Accessories, at BRTA Head Office, Banani, Dhaka	12-Oct-2026 17:00 Hours (BST)	01-Nov-2026 16:00 Hours (BST)	02-Nov-2026 14:00 Hours (BST)

This is an online tender where only e-Tenders will be accepted in national e-GP portal system (http://www.eprocure.gov.bd). No offline/hard copies will be accepted. To submit e-tender please register on e-GP Portal. Information's and guidelines are available in the national e-GP system portal and from e-GP helpdesk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd).

For further information, visit: https://www.eprocure.gov.bd

12.10.2026
Md. Jakir Hossan
Director (Administration)
Phone: 02-41082986
E-mail: da@brta.gov.bd

GD-2491

Pakistan detains 278 PTI members in KP

AGENCIES

Pakistani authorities have detained hundreds of members of jailed former prime minister Imran Khan's party after emergency rule was imposed in a northern province, police officials told AFP yesterday.

Two police officials, speaking on condition of anonymity because they were not authorised to speak to the media, said 278 members of Khan's Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) party had been detained in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province since Sunday's emergency declaration.

The PTI-ruled province was placed under emergency rule following days-long anti-government protests demanding Khan's release, while militant violence in the area has also been mounting,



particularly along the border with Afghanistan.

A senior police official privy to the developments also confirmed to Dawn that eight people — including Afridi, Akbar and assembly speaker Babar Saleem Swati — had been taken into "preventative custody". The official declined to disclose the new location.

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa is a stronghold for Khan's party, and the PTI-led government there would be "non-functional" until the security situation improves, the government said.



Firefighters work at a residential building damaged in a Russian drone strike in Kharkiv, Ukraine yesterday. At least 12 people were wounded in several Russian attacks on Kharkiv, mayor Ihor Terekhov said. PHOTO: AFP

HORMUZ PROPOSAL

Iran to reply to US response after review

AGENCIES

Iran is still reviewing a US response to its proposal regarding the reopening of the Strait of Hormuz and will reply to Washington via intermediaries when the review is over, foreign ministry spokesperson Esmaeil Baghaei said yesterday.

Baghaei also told a press conference that Iran continues to exchange messages via intermediaries, without elaborating. Qatar and Pakistan, among others, have acted as mediators in efforts to end the war that began with US and Israeli strikes on Iran on February 28, reports Reuters.

After a June interim ceasefire crumbled and on-off strikes resumed, Iran presented its proposal in mid-September and later confirmed receipt of a US response. But the process has since stalled, with Iran's security chief saying on Sunday that Washington's response did not sufficiently address Tehran's seven conditions for reopening the Strait of Hormuz and returning to negotiations.

A central point of disagreement has been Washington's insistence on addressing Iran's nuclear programme from the outset. Tehran says negotiations should initially focus on reopening the Strait of Hormuz, which before the war carried about a fifth of the global trade in oil and liquefied natural gas (LNG), and restoring security in the waterway.

Meanwhile, two Indian sailors were missing after a commercial vessel was hit by a "drone attack" Sunday off the coast of Oman, New Delhi's shipping minister said.

Russia hits energy targets despite Trump ceasefire

Kremlin says talks continue on possible energy truce

AFP, *Warsaw*

Waves of Russian strikes on Ukraine overnight and into yesterday killed several people and wounded dozens, including attacks on energy facilities which Kyiv called a violation of a ceasefire on such targets announced by Donald Trump.

Ukraine's leader Volodymyr Zelensky said his country would retaliate if Moscow did not agree to the "energy ceasefire".

"If Russia does not agree to an energy ceasefire, we will respond," Zelensky told the Warsaw Security Forum via videolink.

Trump sowed confusion when he announced an energy ceasefire between the two warring countries without providing details, sparking astonishment in Kyiv, silence from Moscow and support from Ukraine's Western allies.

Macron sees no 'energy truce on Russian side'

EU adopts nearly 1,600 new sanctions listings targeting Russia

Russia, for its part, said talks were ongoing about a possible energy ceasefire, and Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said further information would be revealed in due course. But he also rejected Zelenskiy's proposal for a 60-day truce.

French President Emmanuel Macron yesterday said he had not noticed "any energy truce on the Russian side".

The European Union yesterday formally added almost 1,600 new individuals and entities to its sanctions blacklist over Russia's war on Ukraine, in a bid to keep pressure on Moscow.

Poland's Prime Minister Donald Tusk said that all western countries should be more decisive in containing Russia, as the invasion of Ukraine enters a fifth winter.

IN BRIEF

FLOOD-HIT REGION

100 trekkers stranded in Nepal

REUTERS, *Kathmandu*

The river is a tributary of the Trishuli River, downstream from another tributary where a glacier collapse caused a catastrophic flood in August that killed 1,457 people, with thousands still missing.

The army said the latest rescue operation was continuing yesterday even as the flood has receded. There were no reports of fatalities, but five villagers remained out of contact.

Israeli strike kills two in Gaza: medics

REUTERS, *Cairo*

An Israeli strike killed at least two Palestinians in the southern Gaza Strip yesterday, health officials said.

Late on Sunday, an Israeli airstrike hit a tent in the Mawasi area of Khan Younis in southern Gaza, killing three people, medics said. The Israeli military told Reuters yesterday they struck "militants" in the area.

Israel, which says Hamas has been rearming and launching attacks in violation of a ceasefire, has stepped up strikes on the group in recent weeks.

Civil Aviation Authority of Bangladesh
CEMSU, Kurmitola, Dhaka-1229.

Invitation for International Tender.

1	Ministry/Division	Ministry of Civil Aviation & Tourism	
2	Agency	Civil Aviation Authority of Bangladesh	
3	Procuring Entity Name	CEMSU, CAAB.	
4	Procuring Entity Code	Not used at present	
5	Procuring Entity District	Dhaka	
6	Invitation for	Supply of Brand New latest Model Runway Sweeper for Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport, Dhaka.	
7	Invitation Ref No.	30.31.0000.145.09.005.22/382	
8	Date	09-08-2026.	
KEY INFORMATION			
9	Procurement Method	Open Tendering Method (OTM)	
FUNDING INFORMATION			
10	Budget and Source of Funds	CAAB's own Fund	
11	Development Partners (if applicable)	N/A	
PARTICULAR INFORMATION			
12	Project/Programme Code (if applicable)	N/A	
13	Project/Programme Name (if applicable)	N/A	
14	Tender Package No.	30.31.0000.145.09.005.22/382	
15	Tender No.	CEMSU-01/2026-2027	
16	Tender Package Name	Supply of Brand New latest Model Runway Sweeper for Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport, Dhaka	
17	Tender Publication Date	Within: Date: 14/10/2026	
18	Tender Last Selling Date & Time	Date: 06/12/2026	Time: 04:00 PM
19	Tender Closing Date and Time	Date: 07/12/2026	12.00 Noon
20	Tender Opening Date and Time	Date: 07/12/2026	12.15 P.M
21	Name & Address of the office(s)	Address	
	-Selling Tender Document (Principal)	Executive Director, CEMSU, CAAB, Kurmitola, Dhaka.	
	- Selling Tender Document (Others)	Cash Section of Director (Finance) CAAB HQ Dhaka.	
	- Receiving Tender Document	Executive Director, CEMSU, CAAB, Kurmitola, Dhaka.	
	- Opening Tender Document	Executive Director, CEMSU, CAAB, Kurmitola, Dhaka.	
22	Place / Date / Time of pre- Tender meeting	Office of Executive Director, CEMSU, Dhaka. 19-11-2026, 11.00AM.	
INFORMATION FOR TENDERER			
23	Eligibility of Tenderer	The Manufacturer who have local agent/distributor in Bangladesh and have below mentioned experience are eligible to participate in the tender competition. (a) The minimum of years of general experience of the Tenderer in the supply of Goods and related services as supplier shall be 10 years. (b) The minimum specific experience as Supplier in supply of similar Goods of at least 01 (One) contract(s) successfully completed within the last 03 years, each with a value of at least BDT 6.50 Crore or equivalent USD/EURO. (documents shall be submitted). (c) The minimum amount of financial resources as liquid asset or working capital or credit line(s) or specific credit commitment or in any combination of them, of the Tenderers shall be BDT 8.00 Crore or equivalent USD/EURO. (documents shall be submitted).	
24	Brief Description of Goods or Works	Supply of Brand New latest Model Runway Sweeper for Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport, Dhaka.	
25	Brief Description of Related Services	Supply of Brand New latest Model Runway Sweeper for Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport, Dhaka.	
Price of Tender Document (BDT)		3,000.00 (Three Thousand). (Non-refundable)	

26	Lot No	Identification of Lot	Location	Tender Security Amount	Completion Time
27	1		-	BDT 20.00 (Twenty) Lac or equivalent USD/ EURO	300 Days from LC Opening

PROCURING ENTITY DETAILS				
28	Name of Official Inviting Tender	Executive Director, CEMSU, CAAB, Kurmitola, Dhaka.		
29	Designation of Official Inviting Tender	Executive Director		
30	Address of Official Inviting Tender	CEMSU, CAAB, Kurmitola, Dhaka.		
31	Contact details of Official Inviting Tender	Tel. No: +8802-41091756	Fax No. 88-02-8901411	e-mail: edcemsu@caab.gov.bd

নং-৩০.৩১.০০০০.০৫১.০৫.০০১.২৬/৫৬৪
তারিখঃ ১২/১০/২০২৬ খ্রি.
সাইজঃ- (১০ ইঞ্চি x ৪ কলাম) ।

(Md. Abdul Wadud)
Executive Director
Central Procurement, Engineering & Store Unit.
CEMSU, CAAB, Kurmitola, Dhaka -1229.
Tel: +8802-41091756
Email: edcemsu@caab.gov.bd

GD-2485

গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার
কর কমিশনারের কার্যালয়
কর অঞ্চল-২১, ঢাকা
এম এইচ টাওয়ার (৮ম তলা), ৪২/৪৩, পুরানা পল্টন, ঢাকা
www.taxzone21dhaka.gov.bd

নথি নং: ২স-৭/অংশ-২/বিঃনিঃকঃ/কঃঅঃ-২১,ঢাকা/২০২৬-২০২৭/৩৬২

তারিখঃ ২৬ আশ্বিন ১৪৩৩ বঙ্গাব্দ / ১১ অক্টোবর ২০২৬ খ্রিস্টাব্দ

"নিয়োগ বিজ্ঞপ্তি"

অর্থ মন্ত্রণালয়, অভ্যন্তরীণ সম্পদ বিভাগ, কর-১ শাখা, এর স্মারক নম্বর - ০৮.০০.০০০০.০০০.০৩৭.১১.০০০১.২৪.৩৫৮; তারিখ: ২২ সেপ্টেম্বর ২০২৬ খ্রি. অনুযায়ী প্রাপ্ত ছাড়পত্রের ভিত্তিতে কর অঞ্চল-২১, ঢাকা এর অধীনে গ্রেড-১৩ হতে গ্রেড-২০ পর্যন্ত নিম্নোক্ত ৬টি ক্যাটাগরির ৬৫টি শূন্য পদে সরাসরি কোটায় অস্থায়ী জনবল নিয়োগের লক্ষ্যে **ঢাকা মহানগর ও ঢাকা জেলার** প্রকৃত স্থায়ী বাসিন্দাদের নিকট হতে পদের পার্শ্বে বর্ণিত যোগ্যতা সম্পন্ন প্রার্থীদের শর্ত সাপেক্ষে (https://tax21.teletalk.com.bd) ওয়েবসাইটের মাধ্যমে দরখাস্ত আহ্বান করা যাচ্ছে। উল্লেখ্য, অনলাইন ব্যতীত অন্য কোন উপায়ে আবেদন গ্রহণ করা হবে না।

ক্রমিক নং	পদের নাম ও গ্রেড	পদ সংখ্যা
(১)	ব্যক্তিগত সহকারী (গ্রেড-১৩)	০৫ (পাঁচ)টি
(২)	প্রধান সহকারী (গ্রেড-১৩)	১১ (এগারো)টি
(৩)	উচ্চমান সহকারী (গ্রেড-১৪)	০৮ (আট)টি
(৪)	সাঁটমুদ্রাক্ষরিক কাম-কম্পিউটার অপারেটর (গ্রেড-১৪)	১৬ (ষোলো)টি
(৫)	অফিস সহকারী কাম-কম্পিউটার মুদ্রাক্ষরিক (গ্রেড-১৬)	১৬ (ষোলো)টি
(৬)	অফিস সহায়ক (গ্রেড-২০)	০৯ (নয়)টি

২. পূর্ণাঙ্গ বিজ্ঞপ্তিটি কর অঞ্চল-২১, ঢাকা এর ওয়েবসাইট https://taxzone21dhaka.gov.bd এবং https://tax21.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 বিজ্ঞপ্তিটি পাওয়া যাবে। নিয়োগ পরীক্ষার, তারিখ, সময় ও অন্যান্য তথ্য https://taxzone21dhaka.gov.bd ওয়েবসাইট হতে জানা যাবে।

৩. উল্লেখ্য, আবেদনপত্র পূরণ ও পরীক্ষার ফি জমাদান শুরুর তারিখ ও সময়: ১৪ অক্টোবর ২০২৬ খ্রিস্টাব্দ, সময়: সকাল ১০.০০ ঘটিকা এবং আবেদনপত্র জমাদানের শেষ তারিখ ও সময়: ০৩ 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।

কর অঞ্চল-২১, ঢাকা এর ওয়েবসাইটে প্রবেশ এর QR Code

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কর অঞ্চল-২১, ঢাকা
taxeszone21dhaka@gmail.com

*** 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।

GD-2477

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

BNP must enforce intra-party discipline

PM's warning is a wake-up call for the ruling party, affiliates

We welcome Prime Minister and BNP Chairman Tarique Rahman's warning against extortion and land-grabbing involving party leaders and activists. Speaking at a recent parliamentary party meeting, the ruling party chief also warned the party members against misconduct and instructed the MPs to prevent abuse of power. These warnings are timely considering several recent incidents where members of BNP and its affiliates were implicated. But warnings alone cannot restore public confidence. The party chief's warning should serve as a sobering wake-up call for the party leadership that their credibility is at stake.

The country's overall law and order situation has been on fragile grounds for a while. To the ruling party's embarrassment, its own rank and file have frequently been found embroiled in vandalism, violent clashes, assault of journalists, extortion and other crimes. The demolition and looting of the Radda MCH-FP Centre in Dhaka's Mirpur on September 25 draws a disturbing picture: more than 200 masked men reportedly entered the healthcare facility, looted medicines and equipment, and demolished buildings. Investigations and media reports implicated several individuals linked to local BNP politics, including expelled members and a sitting reserved-seat MP. So strong was their presence during the attack that even police refrained from intervening.

Meanwhile, allegations of extortion against its members have been haunting the ruling party. A police intelligence report prepared in March and April identified around 1,200 extortionists operating in areas under 45 police stations in Dhaka, many of whom are protected by influentials connected to BNP and its affiliates. More recently, a BNP ward-unit president in Dhaka was detained over extortion allegations on October 5, while a Jubo Dal leader was arrested in Munshiganj on October 6 over the alleged abduction and extortion of a marriage registrar.

The BNP must enforce strict internal discipline, remove criminal elements permanently from its ranks, and refuse to protect anyone merely because of their political standing.

The persistence of such allegations has clearly put a dent in the ruling party's standing where it counts most: among the people. Clearly, occasional expulsions or public reprimands have not solved this problem. The ruling party must also address the support system within the party that indulges such criminal elements. The leadership's recent directive against covering up allegations of criminal activity is a step in the right direction. Its implementation will be the real test. The BNP must enforce strict internal discipline, remove criminal elements permanently from its ranks, and refuse to protect anyone merely because of their political standing. Where credible evidence supports allegations, it must cooperate fully with law enforcement agencies and allow legal proceedings to take their course. And party leaders and lawmakers must stop using political clout to influence investigations, intimidate complainants or obstruct justice.

As the ruling party prepares for local government elections, it must get its members in order. It cannot expect to win public confidence in the polls if it continues to follow the old playbook of political patronage and intimidation. A party-wide reform must be a priority for the party leadership.

Girls must be able to play without fear

Female footballers and athletes deserve a safe playing environment

We are alarmed by the cancellation of a women's football match in Sunamganj because of objections and threats from a group of local residents. The match between Shopno Chura Sporting Club of Derai and Zara Sporting Club of Sylhet was supposed to take place on October 5 at Derai Upazila Stadium. The incident shows how some extremist groups continue to oppose women's participation in sports and try to impose their views on others. It is also concerning that the local administration and police failed to provide the support needed to hold the match. By giving in to such pressure, the authorities have undermined women's right to sports and failed to ensure equal opportunities for all.

The organisers were forced to cancel the match shortly before kick-off after some residents objected to women playing football, describing the game as "indecent". The group reportedly approached the upazila nirbahi officer (UNO) to demand that the match be stopped, and later returned to press their demand. The organisers said they contacted the police but were advised to suspend the match. Such responses from the authorities only reward intimidation and allow opponents of women's participation in public life to dictate their choices. Similar disruptions occurred in Joypurhat and Dinajpur in January 2025 by groups who opposed female athletes taking the field. Must women and girls defend their right to play sports every time someone objects?

These incidents come at a time when women's football has become a source of national pride, with players from remote areas contributing significantly to the country's achievements. When even the government encourages girls to take part in sports through various initiatives, local authorities appear unable to protect them from those seeking to obstruct their participation. Encouraging girls to play sports means little if they cannot do so without fear. The girls of Shopno Chura Sporting Club have played football since 2019, travelling to Dhaka and elsewhere for matches and competing in national-level tournaments. Their commitment deserves support, not humiliation or intimidation.

The government must act now to ensure that the match is held with adequate security, and that those who threatened the organisers are identified and held accountable. The Sunamganj administration and police must also explain why they failed to ensure that the match would take place. Sporting bodies, local representatives and community leaders should also speak out against attempts to restrict women's participation in sports. If necessary, the government should also examine whether stronger legal safeguards are required to prevent such obstruction of women's sporting events.

Why do we keep starting from scratch in policymaking?



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■ **SYED ABDUL HAMID**

Over the past five and a half decades, Bangladesh has made remarkable progress. Its economy has grown, infrastructure has expanded, and it has achieved significant gains in education, health, and other social indicators. Yet, one critical aspect of governance remains underdeveloped: our capacity to formulate, implement, evaluate and improve public policies through strong institutions and consistent leadership.

In policymaking, we seem to have spent 55 years struggling to move beyond Class 1. This is not to dismiss the country's achievements or the capabilities of its people. Rather, it reflects a persistent weakness in how we manage knowledge, develop institutional expertise and ensure continuity in public administration.

Bangladesh has no shortage of talented officials, professionals or researchers. The problem is that relevant expertise is not always given sufficient weight when people are appointed to key policymaking positions. Nor do officials always have enough time to understand their sectors and translate that knowledge into meaningful reforms. When someone assumes a senior position without adequate experience in the relevant field, valuable time must be spent learning the sector's institutions, challenges, policies, and past initiatives. The result is that the time available for reform and implementation is often consumed by the need to learn the basics.

Consider the health sector. A senior official must understand not only the administrative structure of the health ministry but also health financing, medicine supply chains, human resources, hospital management, primary healthcare, health insurance, and public procurement. Equally important is understanding why previous policies were adopted, what they achieved and where they failed. Similar complexities exist in education, agriculture, finance and social protection.

The problem deepens when an official finally develops the necessary understanding and experience but is transferred, reassigned or retired before meaningful reforms can take root. A successor arrives and begins the learning process anew. By the time that person becomes familiar with the sector, another change may occur. Individuals repeatedly learn, but institutions fail to accumulate knowledge.

Consider a long-term health financing reform. Establishing a new financing system requires decisions on revenue sources, fund management, benefit packages, provider payments, hospital readiness, information systems and accountability. The model must then be tested, evaluated and adjusted before being scaled up. Frequent leadership changes can disrupt this process, encourage shifting priorities, and leave reforms unfinished. New initiatives may be launched before earlier ones have been properly evaluated.

The same risk applies to infrastructure, education, agriculture, urban management and digital transformation. A digital public service, for example, requires more than software. It needs instructional development, reliable data, coordination across agencies, adequate funding, skilled personnel, information security and long-term maintenance. If every change in leadership introduces a new platform or approach, public resources may be wasted on overlapping systems and repeated investments.

Good policymaking is not a one-time decision; it is a continuous cycle of learning and improvement. Problems must be identified, evidence collected and analysed, stakeholders consulted, alternatives assessed, and financial and administrative feasibility examined. Policies must then be implemented, evaluated and revised in light of the results. The cycle is straightforward: learn, analyse, decide, implement, evaluate and improve.

When this cycle breaks down, policies may be poorly designed, implementation may begin without adequate preparation, and promising initiatives may lose momentum after leadership changes. We repeatedly form committees, commission reports, prepare action plans and organise workshops, yet the desired results often remain elusive. The weakness is not necessarily our ability to identify problems; it is our failure to consistently translate findings into action, measure outcomes and learn from experience.

Institutional memory is therefore a critical public asset. When an official or expert leaves, the knowledge accumulated during their tenure should remain within the institution. This requires systematic documentation of policy decisions, accessible records of research and consultations, regular performance reviews and effective handover arrangements. It also requires recognising specialised knowledge and professional experience when assigning responsibilities.



VISUAL: **SALMAN SAKIB SHAHRYAR**

The challenge, however, is broader than frequent transfers. Continuity alone cannot guarantee good policymaking if decisions are driven by personal preferences rather than evidence, or if institutions lack accountability. What matters is a system that combines appropriate expertise, reasonable continuity, transparent decision-making and institutional learning.

Several reforms could help Bangladesh move to the next grade. First, appointments to key policymaking positions should place greater weight on relevant sectoral knowledge, professional competence, and experience. Unnecessary transfers should be reduced, and reasonable minimum tenures ensured, while accountability for performance is retained.

Second, every major policy should have a documented institutional record covering its rationale, supporting evidence, stakeholder consultations, implementation progress, challenges, and future priorities. Such records would allow successors to build on previous work rather than start from scratch. Third, major policy decisions should be preceded by systematic assessments of costs, benefits, alternatives, and risks. Implementation should be followed by regular evaluation against measurable outcomes, with revisions made when evidence warrants them.

Fourth, coordination among ministries and agencies must improve. Universities, research institutions, professional bodies and independent experts should contribute more meaningfully to policy development and evaluation. Reliable data systems and mechanisms for sharing evidence must support this collaboration.

Ultimately, the question is not simply who occupies a particular position. It is whether our institutions can learn, preserve knowledge and apply lessons to future decisions. National development depends not only on roads, bridges, buildings and technology but also on the quality of the institutions that plan, manage and sustain them.

Bangladesh's achievements over the past 55 years deserve recognition. The next phase of development must also strengthen the institutions responsible for shaping the country's future. We must stop repeatedly returning to the lessons of Class 1 and move to the next grade, where institutions, not individuals, preserve knowledge, continuity strengthens policy, and evidence guides decisions.

Otherwise, another 55 years from now, we may still be asking: have we finally moved from Class 1 to Class 2 in policymaking?

INTERNATIONAL DAY FOR DISASTER RISK REDUCTION

Prepare for disasters before they strike



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■ **MOHAMMAD ABU TOYAB**

The theme for International Day for Disaster Risk Reduction this year—"Resilience Starts at Home"—resonates with profound optimism and practical hope for our nation. For millions of households across our delta, from the coastal stretches of the south to the hillside communities of Chattogram, home signifies not merely a physical shelter, but the fundamental foundation of life, dignity, and economic survival. Over the decades, Bangladesh has built an internationally recognised legacy of saving lives through robust community volunteer networks, extensive cyclone shelters, and reliable early warning systems. As we celebrate these remarkable achievements, we stand at an exciting threshold: transforming our disaster management paradigm from reactive recovery to proactive, household-centred resilience by Forecast-based Financing (FbF) or anticipatory action (AA).

Building resilience at the household level requires us to rethink our historical financial and operational practices. Historically, our disaster response mechanisms have been heavily weighted towards post-disaster relief and reconstruction. Between 2000 and 2023 alone, extreme weather events cost Bangladesh over $13.6 billion and affected more than 13 crore people. The urgency of shifting this balance was underlined again during the July 2026 flash floods, which affected over 12.8 lakh people across Bangladesh, destroying or damaging tens of thousands of homes, causing an estimated $17.3 million in livestock and fisheries losses, and forcing thousands into evacuation shelters.

While post-event aid remains critical, waiting until damage occurs places an immense strain on family budgets and national resources. Operationalising the National Strategy for Disaster Risk Financing 2025 and expanding dedicated disaster management funds at national, district, and upazila levels are vital steps forward. However, generating sustainable domestic funds for disaster management requires moving beyond routine budgetary allocations. Crucially, connecting local funds to global mechanisms like the Green Climate Fund (GCF) can bridge the adaptation financing gap—enabling pre-arranged financing and pre-emptive investments that protect homes, assets, and livelihoods long before floodwaters rise or storm surges breach our dykes.

Nature provides our most effective and sustainable shield for protecting homes and local communities. Across the country, nature-based solutions (NbS) offer practical, community-driven protection that complements hard engineering infrastructure. Coastal mangrove restoration dampens storm surges and prevents shoreline erosion, directly protecting coastal homesteads. In the Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT), bio-engineering approaches—such as planting deep-rooting vetiver grass and Indigenous vegetation—bind fragile hillsides, preventing devastating monsoon landslides and keeping families safe in their homes. Furthermore, the government's nationwide tree-plantation initiatives demonstrate how Ecosystem-based Disaster Risk Reduction (Eco-DRR) can be operationalised on a massive scale. Beyond sequestering carbon, large-scale tree planting stabilises riverbanks, reduces urban heat stress, improves soil integrity, and safeguards residential areas. Strengthening these initiatives requires systematically integrating green infrastructure into local upazila disaster management plans, urban settlement guidelines, and community maintenance frameworks.

Anticipatory action acts as the vital bridge that connects early warning indicators with household-level protection across all three phases of the disaster cycle. Far from being a standalone tool, AA ensures that resilience can begin at home before, during, and after a crisis. In the pre-disaster phase, it supports mitigation and preparedness by funding community nurseries, establishing bio-engineering green buffers on vulnerable slopes, and building local capacity. During the inter-disaster phase—the crucial window between a forecast trigger and impact—it releases pre-arranged financing to deliver unconditional cash transfers directly via mobile phones, helping families to fortify their dwellings, secure livestock, store clean water, and protect essential documents. Evidence shows that every $1 invested in AA can yield up to $7 in avoided losses and humanitarian savings. In the post-disaster phase, anticipatory frameworks guide eco-restoration and sustainable recovery, helping communities build greener buffers and restore local natural assets.

As we mark International Day for Disaster Risk Reduction, Bangladesh's path forward lies in championing a proactive, nature-rooted framework that puts families and communities at the centre. By combining high-resolution forecasting from the Bangladesh Meteorological Department and the Flood Forecasting and Warning Centre (under the Bangladesh Water Development Board) with pre-arranged disaster financing and nature-based solutions, we can ensure that every household across the country is empowered to withstand climatic shocks. True disaster management is not measured by how effectively we clean up after a disaster, but by how well we can safeguard our homes, ecosystems, and our people before the storm arrives.

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'ACC must be freed from political and bureaucratic influence'

Dr Iftekharuzzaman, *executive director of Transparency International Bangladesh (TIB) and former head of the Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) Reform Commission, speaks to* **Tasneem Tayeb** *of* **The Daily Star** *about the state of corruption in Bangladesh, the fate of reform efforts, and the changes needed to hold those in power accountable.*

ACC was established in 2004 as an independent institution to combat corruption. More than two decades later, corruption remains deeply embedded in the public sector. What was the original thinking behind the commission, and where did it fail in practice?

The former Bureau of Anti-Corruption, which ACC replaced, was part of the government and directly under its control. Since government departments and those in power were themselves often accused of corruption, the bureau could not function effectively. It rather became an instrument for harassing political opponents. We wanted a specialised, independent institution free from government influence.

Fighting corruption, however, needs more than one institution. Parliament, the judiciary, law enforcement agencies, and the bureaucracy must also fulfil their responsibilities. Parliamentary committees, for example, are supposed to hold the government accountable, but whether they function properly remains a major question.

Moreover, since its beginning, appointments to the commission reflected partisan political choices. Its leadership favoured the ruling authorities while targeting political opponents, allowing the bureau's culture to continue under a new identity. Bureaucratic influence compounded the problem as senior positions below the commissioners came to be dominated by deputed officials whose allegiance remained with the bureaucracy. This damaged ACC's capacity and credibility. People saw minor offenders pursued while powerful figures escaped accountability.

We recommended limiting the number of deputed bureaucrats and addressing corruption within ACC itself. Officials implicated in corruption should be removed and handed over to the relevant law enforcement agencies.

Does this chequered history suggest that policymakers failed to understand how corruption operates in Bangladesh, or that their knowledge has not translated into action?

I would not say policymakers do not understand corruption. Having engaged with those in power over the years, I know there is a clear understanding of what corruption is, how it can be combated, and what their responsibilities are. These are documented in laws, policies, codes of conduct, and reform recommendations. What's missing is execution, as those who are supposed to apply this knowledge are often beneficiaries of corruption themselves. They protect the system and thus enable further corruption.

Ironically, fighting corruption has become central to political rhetoric. Election manifestos or government statements are full of commitments. The current ruling party's 31-point agenda, election manifesto, and the July Charter, which its leaders have pledged to implement word for word, also contain specific commitments against corruption. So political will exists on paper, but it is not reflected in practice.

TIB's household surveys have found that 85 percent of respondents who paid bribes said they would not have received their service otherwise. This shows how deeply systemic corruption is. Catching individual offenders cannot solve the problem while the wider system remains unchanged. Expectations naturally focus on ACC as the institution specifically mandated to fight corruption, but other institutions responsible for strengthening the state's capacity to control corruption have also failed to fulfil their roles.

To be clear, corruption does not mean just bribery. It involves the abuse of power for private gain often through collusion among political actors, public officials, and business interests. So to tackle it, we must dismantle the wider ecosystem that allows such practices to persist.

The government has recently decided to set up separate anti-corruption committees in every ministry. What gaps could these committees fill when the existing mechanisms have failed to ensure accountability?



PHOTO: **STAR**

Dr Iftekharuzzaman

I think this may turn out to be another example of rhetoric as the government is not approaching the problem strategically. In Bangladesh, committees are often formed to deflect attention from key issues, while their reports remain unpublished and their effectiveness is rarely evident. Their work is also likely to be hampered by conflicts of interest. As things stand, the most senior officials in each ministry already have responsibilities for ensuring accountability, integrity, and corruption-free administration. There is, moreover, no clear indication of what these new committees will actually do.

Speaking of strategic interventions, we recommended a national anti-corruption strategy assigning specific responsibilities to the institutions concerned. The government has yet to act on this proposal, even though the ruling party, like other political parties, fully endorsed it. The idea is to transform the existing National Integrity Strategy into a national anti-corruption strategy. But these committees, representing an ad hoc approach, may, at best, recommend transferring a corrupt official from one ministry or department to another. Such departmental action has already proved ineffective and could become another way of protecting corrupt officials by simply shifting them around.

Higher salaries are often presented as a way to curb corruption in the public sector. How can the new pay scale help achieve this when previous increases have failed to do so?

Public officials are a fixed-income group, so we cannot expect them to perform to the best of their ability and with integrity unless their salaries and benefits are commensurate with the cost of living. Reviewing salaries periodically is also a standard practice. That said, better pay must be linked to accountability. We recommended making annual public disclosure of assets and income a condition for receiving the revised pay scale. Officials agreeing to disclose their assets and update their statements annually would receive the increase, while those unwilling to do so would not. The purpose was to make the salary revision an effective tool for controlling corruption.

But the proposal was not accepted because of resistance from bureaucrats. Without accountability, I fear that higher salaries could simply lead to demands for higher bribes rather than help curb corruption.

The interim government established reform commissions but left many of their recommendations unimplemented. Where did it fall short, particularly in relation to the ACC reforms you proposed?

Forming the commissions was a positive step, but the interim government lacked a clear vision for what to do with their reports. It committed to implementing the recommendations that could be acted upon immediately through executive authority or by the relevant institutions, without needing to wait for a new government or constitutional changes. But most recommendations were left aside, apart from a few selected on an ad hoc basis as a token gesture. Where legal changes were made, they often reflected the government's own ideas rather than the commissions' recommendations. The ACC ordinance left out critical recommendations of the ACC Reform Commission.

We wanted ACC to have full independence alongside accountability. Independence cannot mean the absence of accountability. ACC must answer for protecting those in power or harassing political opponents. Our proposed reforms sought to address both political influence and bureaucratic control, but those critical changes remain unimplemented. The promise that cabinet members and public officials would disclose their wealth statements was also delayed until shortly before the interim government stepped down. What was eventually disclosed was controversial, to say the least. These examples raise questions about the seriousness of the interim government's commitment to transparency and the foundation it left for reform.

What should the current government prioritise to give substance to its commitments against corruption?

It must abandon the mindset that "it is now our turn" and the winner-takes-all politics: the idea that we have been deprived of opportunities for so long, so winning the election entitles us to capture everything. Political positions, elected or unelected, within parties or the government, are unfortunately being treated as a licence for profiteering and personal gain. After the former regime fell on August 5, 2024, the space it had occupied through extortion and corruption was taken over by those who emerged as victors. This continued under the interim government and persists today.

This political culture, in which the abuse of power simply changes hands, must end. Political commitment must be demonstrated by enabling institutions to hold those in power to account. People must also be able to reject and report corruption without facing retaliation. Harassing those who expose corruption while protecting the corrupt only allows it to flourish.

Four elements must work in concert—political commitment, the capacity to hold offenders accountable, independent and effective institutions, and people's ability to stand against corruption. If any of these is missing, the system cannot deliver what is promised.

If you could begin making changes now, what would be your first priority, and what results would convince people that accountability is finally possible?

There is no single magic bullet for fighting corruption. My first priority nevertheless would be to create the conditions for the governing authorities to address the two major drivers of unabated corruption: cleansing the ruling party of corruption at all levels and overhauling a bureaucracy that has become deeply entrenched in preserving systemic corruption. The first step to that end would be to require public officials to disclose their annually updated assets for public scrutiny. Equally important is a truly independent, corruption-free, efficient, and accountable ACC. The recommendations are already there on how to make it effective. Its ability to function properly depends on the government allowing it to exercise its mandate without partisan influence or bureaucratic control.

We need to see corruption, especially at higher levels, punished. The commission has hundreds of cases; it cannot, nor does it need to, handle all of them at once. Prioritising high-profile cases and securing exemplary punishments in, say, even 10 cases a year could send a powerful signal to society.

ACC cannot deliver this alone. It needs, among other things, a truly independent judicial system that upholds the highest standards of integrity. Fighting corruption needs a comprehensive strategy combining both prevention and control and involving the whole of the state and society.

Stop attacks on campus journalists and ensure accountability



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■ **MD ASADUZ ZAMAN**



FILE ILLUSTRATION: **SALMAN SAKIB SHAHRYAR**

Campus journalism is often seen as a stepping stone to the profession; it is also a training ground. But it is far more than an extracurricular activity. Alongside their studies, campus journalists carry a real ethical responsibility. Campus correspondents are often the first to report what is happening around them. They ask difficult questions and give students a platform to speak about issues that might otherwise go unheard. At the same time, these young journalists are well positioned to expose long-standing malpractice. However, this job is far from easy. The occupation can come with threats, intimidation, expulsion, and even violence.

Protecting these journalists, therefore, is essential not only for their safety, but also for accountability, freedom of expression, and the free flow of information on campus. The latest heinous attack on several Rajshahi University correspondents, carried out by members of the ruling party's student wing, Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD), goes far beyond threats or intimidation. Although the JCD has expelled its three leaders and The Daily Star has identified seven JCD men and published their photos, the university hall administration filed a case with Motihar Police Station against "unidentified people". This potentially raises a broader concern about a culture in which accountability is weakened when perpetrators remain unidentified. In some cases, universities routinely respond to such incidents by forming probe committees, only for their findings to gather dust for years.

Consider the Dhaka University case, for instance. On April 23, several reporters of the Dhaka University Journalists' Association (DUJA) were assaulted allegedly by a group of JCD leaders and activists inside Shahbagh Police Station while covering a dispute triggered by a derogatory Facebook post targeting the prime minister and his daughter. Five months on, the university administration is yet to publish an investigation report.

Universities are places to question, debate, and challenge ideas, and campus journalism is an extension of them. However, when reporting expands to cover topics like irregularities, discrimination, and misconduct, the reporters often come under fire. Asking difficult questions becomes harder when journalists fear what might happen after publication. I know this fear first-hand. When I was a campus correspondent at Jahangirnagar University five years ago, senior administration officials would often remind me, "You are a student first, then a journalist." The remark is not entirely wrong. Student reporters must balance their academic careers with a demanding and vulnerable job. But the line also works as a warning, and sometimes, the work can jeopardise the reporter's academic life.

I can recall two cases in the past decade in which campus reporters were suspended from their universities. One is Mohammad Iqbal Monwar, a reporter for the Bangla daily Jaijaidin at Comilla University, who was suspended over a report in 2023. The suspension order said Monwar had violated university discipline by allegedly distorting a statement by the then VC AFM Abdul Moyeen, and intentionally circulating misleading information to tarnish the university's image. The other case involved Fatema Tuz Zinia, the university correspondent for The Daily Sun. The Gopalganj Science and Technology University suspended her over social media posts that the authorities claimed had damaged the institution's image.

Such incidents affect far more than the journalists targeted. The immediate victim may drop a story; other journos become reluctant to investigate similar issues, while editors grow more cautious about publishing sensitive reports. Eventually, self-censorship takes root. Therefore, the safety of campus journalists, who is also the student of the university, must be treated as an institutional issue. When a journalist faces intimidation, threats, or violence because of their work, complaints must be taken seriously, investigated transparently and settled through established rules and procedures.

Too often, however, the authorities themselves are part of the problem. In 2019, when I was a leader of the Jahangirnagar University Journalists' Association, two of my colleagues—Shoriful Islam Simanto of Bangladesh Pratidin and Maidul Islam of Prothom Alo—were assaulted when they sought comments from then vice-chancellor Farzana Islam while investigating allegations that Bangladesh Chhatra League leaders had demanded Tk 2 crore from the VC as "Eid salami," claiming it was their "fair share".

However, this does not mean campus journalists should be above criticism. Student journalists, like all journalists, must verify facts, avoid presenting allegations as facts, give people a fair chance to respond, and rely on evidence rather than sensationalism. They should correct their mistakes, and those who feel misrepresented have the right to seek a correction or respond. But intimidation or violence is never an acceptable response.

Student organisations also have an important role in creating this culture where people are welcome to strongly disagree with a report, may challenge information or interpretation. Such disagreement is part of a healthy campus environment. But disagreement should be expressed through argument, evidence and logic—not through threats or violence. Newsrooms, too, have a responsibility to support campus reporters, including with legal and financial assistance when necessary. Many correspondents work with limited support despite the risks involved.

Universities should be places where questions are embraced, evidence is treated with importance, and disagreements are resolved through dialogue. Protecting campus journalism means protecting young people's space to question power. As when a campus journalist is silenced by fear, the entire campus loses an important channel of accountability.

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

EIGHT WINS FOR 'DUI SHAW', Nuhash Humayun responds with gratitude



RAKSHANDA RAHMAN MISHA

Nuhash Humayun's ***Dui Shaw*** swept the Critics category, winning all eight awards, including Best Director, at the Blender's Choice–The Daily Star OTT & Digital Content Awards 2025. Despite earning numerous international accolades, the filmmaker was pleasantly surprised by the overwhelming recognition his psychological horror series received at home.

In an interview with The Daily Star, the director discusses the popularity of the ***Shaw*** franchise, the technical efforts behind bringing ***Dui Shaw*** to life, and collaborating with his mother, writer Gultekin Khan, on the screenplay.

"Most of the awards I have won are from international festivals. But receiving awards in Bangladesh feels great because it is really special. I don't expect much from Bangladeshi award shows because the industry is small and everybody knows everybody, so there can be biases. I knew we might win something because we make unique work, but the result was still surprising and nice," he said.

For Nuhash, the awards were also an opportunity to reunite with the team behind ***Dui Shaw***, a project that took more than a year to complete. "Seeing everyone again after all that time, sharing the joy and bringing some closure to the project, was really nice," he said.

The recognition follows the international journey of the ***Shaw*** franchise. The first season, ***Pett Kata Shaw,*** premiered at the International Film Festival Rotterdam (IFFR), while ***Dui Shaw*** was screened at the South by Southwest (SXSW) Film Festival in Austin, Texas.

While the Best Director and Best Screenplay awards were gratifying, Nuhash was especially proud of the technical teams recognised for their work in costume design, sound design and editing. Horror, he explained, leaves little room for technical errors.

"With horror, everything has to be absolutely on point. Even a small mistake in the makeup can turn a scene from horror into comedy. Every department has to work together to make the experience believable," he said.

When ***Pett Kata Shaw*** was first conceived, exploring horror on screen was a major risk, despite Bangladesh's rich tradition of folk tales and supernatural stories.

"There is so much potential in Bangla horror, but when we started shooting ***Pett Kata Shaw,*** we were unsure whether it would work. There was an electrifying energy on set amid all that uncertainty," Nuhash recalled.

By the time they made ***Dui Shaw***, the team had gained confidence, making it easier to bring established actors on board, including Jaya Ahsan in a cameo and Mosharraf Karim in a prominent role.

The production also presented technical challenges. One of the most difficult sequences was the chainsaw scene in ***Waqt***. To avoid using a real blade, the team attached a Styrofoam replacement to an electric chainsaw. However, its speed still posed a risk, requiring several crew members to carefully control the equipment around actor Rizvi Rizu. The heat in Bangladesh also made special-effects makeup difficult to maintain, often requiring repeated applications during filming.

Another highlight was the screenplay, which Nuhash co-wrote with his mother, writer Gultekin Khan. Working from the United States while she was in Bangladesh, they exchanged ideas through emails and calls, even writing dialogues together.

Beshura proved particularly challenging, drawing inspiration from Satyajit Ray's ***Hirak Rajar Deshe*** and ***Goopy Gyne Bagha Byne.*** Gultekin's poetry-writing experience helped shape its distinctive dialogue.

From taking a chance on horror to earning critical acclaim at home and abroad, the ***Shaw*** franchise has demonstrated the potential of Bangladeshi supernatural storytelling. For Nuhash, however, its success is measured not only in awards, but also in the collective effort behind the work and the memories it creates for audiences.

'Master' wins Best Screenplay at Belgrade film festival



Bangladeshi filmmaker Rezwan Shahriar Sumit's political drama ***Master*** has won Best Screenplay in the World Competition section of the Belgrade International Film Festival (FEST).

Co-written by Sumit and Sabbir Hossain Shovon, the film previously won the Big Screen Award at the International Film Festival Rotterdam and Best Feature Film at Italy's Lucca Film Festival.

Master follows Jahir, a respected teacher who enters local politics with idealistic ambitions but gradually compromises his principles under the pressures of power.

The film stars Nasir Uddin Khan, Azmeri Haque Badhan, Zakia Bari Mamo, Fazlur Rahman Babu, Sharif Siraj and Tasnova Tamanna.

Sumit previously directed ***The Salt in Our Waters (Nonajoler Kabbo)***, which received seven Bangladesh National Film Awards.

EVENTS

'THE SEA OF SILENCE'



A new theatre troupe Thespians De Dhaka debuts with Tazuddin Tazu's psychological drama, charting a fractured family's emotional voyage from Haiphong to London. Set against an atmospheric sea journey, the production crafts a tense, character-driven exploration of memory, hidden guilt, and quiet longing.

Date: Wednesday | October 14, 2026
Time: 7:15 PM
Venue: Experimental Theatre Hall, BSA, Dhaka

NEWS

Students lock

FROM PAGE 12

resignation. They gave him an ultimatum to leave campus by noon. When the deadline passed, students declared the building "vacant," re-locked the outer gates, and cut off utility lines.

"The newly appointed VC entered the campus by hiding his identity and broke the locks to enter the office," said Ahnaf Shahriar Arnob, a student and a coordinator of the movement.

"He ignored the ultimatum, so we locked the building from the outside. We will continue our peaceful protests and request him to step down honourably."

Trapped inside alongside the VC, JCD unit President Wasif Rashed denied breaking into the office.

"VC sir went to his office with the teachers and officials. We went to greet him," Rashed told The Daily Star over the phone, claiming the demonstration was being manipulated.

"Students' agitation has been hijacked by a vested quarter. A section of teachers is provoking students for their own interests."

Meanwhile, around 3:30pm, the CUET Teachers', Officers', and Staff Associations held a joint press conference at the university auditorium to announce a strike.

CUET Teachers' Association President Professor Mohammad Ahsan Ullah, at the press conference, said the VC entered the office with outsiders.

"We are calling for a complete work stoppage and all-out non-cooperation until our demands are met. CUET's community does not accept him as vice-chancellor."

"He will be held responsible if any untoward incident occurs," he added.

Speaking to reporters through a gap in the locked main gate, Professor Alam defended his appointment, saying that the government followed due procedure in appointing him.

"Some people here want the former VC reinstated," he said.

Downplaying any personal rivalry, he described former VC Professor Sayem as a gentleman, a great teacher, and a batchmate, adding, "We are not enemies."

Contacted, Superintendent of Police (SP) of Chattogram District, Masud Alam, said, "The vice-chancellor himself does not want to come out of his office. I spoke to him over the phone in the afternoon."

Meanwhile, Chattogram Additional Superintendent of Police Md Sirajul Islam dismissed students' claim that two university buses travelling from the city had been attacked in Madunaghat area around 2:00pm, clarifying that the vehicles were merely turned back by road obstructions.

On September 21, Professor Alam was appointed as VC of CUET, replacing Professor Sayem after just 56 days in office. Professor Alam has been attempting to conduct administrative functions remotely from the Chattogram Circuit House.

As night fell, the main administrative gates remained padlocked, with students holding sit-ins outside.

Ex-army officers on 4-day remand in sedition case

FROM PAGE 2

Gulshan Ara had also used her Facebook account to disseminate content and carry out activities against the state, said DB Inspector Sheikh Bashir Ahmed in the report.

The investigator alleged that the accused were involved in terrorist activities through illegal funding to facilitate the activities of a banned organisation.

"On November 27, 2018, ahead of the national election, Gulshan Ara went to Ganabhaban with more than 150 retired army officers and publicly expressed solidarity with and allegiance to Sheikh Hasina," the report said.

The report further alleged that the two accused, along with 101 others, had established a committee named "Bangabandhu Sena Parishad" and that the two were active office-bearers of the organisation.

Its primary activities allegedly involved spreading hatred among different social groups and communities to incite riots and clashes.

The accused actively participated in such activities to create disorder in the country and undermine its sovereignty, the report said.

They also allegedly spread hatred and contempt towards the government established by law through social media and appearances on various talk shows, engaging in activities amounting to sedition, it added.

Since August 5, 2024, the two accused and their associates had allegedly been conspiring against the government and conducting defamatory propaganda. Evidence had reportedly been found of their links with domestic and foreign spies, the investigator said.

Gulshan Ara, 43, was arrested during a drive in Pallabi, while Debashish, 47, was arrested from Banani DOHS early yesterday, according to police.

The police filed a case against the duo -- along with 101 other unnamed persons -- with Pallabi Police Station under Section 124A of the Penal Code, Sections 10, 11, 12 and 18(1) of the Anti-Terrorism Act, and Section 25 of the Cyber Security Ordinance.

Amid tight security, the two were escorted to a courtroom of the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's Court around 5:45pm for hearing the remand prayer.

Americans Hall, Woodford win

FROM PAGE 12

"...Authorities shouldn't view stabilisation of the economy as an exercise that is simply conducted by people pulling levers to control the economy independently of what people in the economy understand about this," Columbia University's Woodford, 70, told a news conference.

In contrast to the oil shocks of the 1970s, when central banks struggled to combat sky-high inflation, Woodford said the new framework was useful during the global financial crisis of the late-2000s to bolster traditional tools of monetary policy.

"Making more explicit statements about the likely future path of interest rate policy, as opposed to relying on simply being able to cut interest rates further immediately, that was an important part of the policy response in the years from 2009 onward," he said.

Beyond so-called "forward guidance" on the future path of monetary policy, the work of Woodford – and Hall, 83, at Stanford University – promoted other concepts used today such as the idea of "sticky" inflation when price changes lag changes in demand.

Another is the "output gap", a measure of demand pressure building up in an economy and how efficiently resources are being used - the goal of stabilisation policy being to steer that gap towards zero.

Hall has served as adviser to the US Treasury Department, the Justice Department and the Federal Reserve Board.

His insight in a 1978 paper that household decisions on consumption are a perfect indicator of their expectations was used by Woodford in a model on how consumption is determined.

Woodford also showed that central banks can stimulate or suppress economic activity by adjusting interest rates, rather than just by the amount of money in circulation.

Such concepts remain core to central banking today. Forward guidance became especially important after the 2008 financial crisis, when rates were near zero or even negative and standard monetary policy seemed to be out of ammunition.

Now, however, some are questioning how relevant it is given the amount of uncertainty in the global economy - with new US Federal Reserve Chair Kevin Warsh a notable sceptic.

The economics prize, formally known as the Sveriges Riksbank Prize in Economic Sciences in Memory of Alfred Nobel, is the final award to be given out this year and is worth 12 million Swedish crowns ($1.2 million).

First awarded in 1969, it is not one of the original five awards created in the 1895 will of industrialist and dynamite inventor Alfred Nobel, but was established by Sweden's central bank.

Skies over Riyadh

FROM PAGE 12

Saudi Arabia's energy minister acknowledged that the kingdom's infrastructure and resilience had been tested, as he vowed a firm response following a wave of deadly attacks by Houthis, reports AFP.

"For Saudi Arabia, these circumstances have tested our infrastructure, our institutions, our people, and our resilience. They have also tested decisions made long before present crises, because resilience is built before crises begin," Energy Minister Prince Abdulaziz bin Salman said.

"Energy security can't be taken for granted," he told a high-profile conference in Riyadh. "The events of recent weeks are serious, our response must be equally serious."

Meanwhile, Iran said it was "deeply concerned" by escalating attacks between Houthis and Saudi Arabia, after 14 people died in two days of strikes on Riyadh's airport.

"We are deeply concerned about the developments taking place in the Arabian Peninsula," foreign ministry spokesman Esmaeil Baqaei told a weekly press conference, adding that Tehran was ready "to help facilitate dialogue between the parties".

A senior aviation source who oversees flights to the Gulf for an airline said operations would be halted for the remainder of the working week in Saudi Arabia, according to messages sent to the carrier yesterday from Saudi aviation authorities.

LPG prices still high despite improved supply

FROM PAGE 12

The society urged the government or the companies concerned to allow operational companies to refill millions of idle cylinders belonging to suppliers unable to provide gas for prolonged periods.

Other demands included showing original prices on company invoices to distributors, ensuring fair transport compensation for companies' failure to deliver gas to distributors' warehouses, and ending traffic police cases against LPG-carrying vehicles solely for lacking safety railings despite having all other required documents.

It also urged the Directorate of National Consumer Rights Protection to stop imposing what it called "unethical and unreasonable fines".

Society leaders cited complications with letters of credit (LCs) as a factor behind the supply crisis, saying few companies remained operational. They also alleged that some companies increased prices without regulatory approval, sometimes within days of BERC announcing monthly rates.

Society President Md Selim Khan said traders faced repeated legal action and penalties despite appeals to the authorities. He cited a distributor in the Khulna-Bagerhat region who was heavily fined and had goods confiscated for storing 40 additional cylinders.

During the briefing, BERC Chairman Jalal Ahmed phoned the business leaders and assured them he would take steps to examine their demands and address the crisis, Selim said.

Jalal told The Daily Star that BERC planned to review dealer and retailer commissions, last fixed in 2021. "We will certainly hold a public hearing."

BERC's latest announcement fixes the distribution charge for a 12kg cylinder at Tk 50 and the retailer's charge at Tk 45.

Meanwhile, the LPG Operators Association of Bangladesh (LOAB) called for legal action against businesses hoarding cylinders or selling gas above the regulated price.

LOAB President Mohammed Amirul Haque said the association had repeatedly demanded action against violators.

"My position is clear: if any operator, distributor or retailer does anything wrong, take legal action against them," he said.

He acknowledged that consumers were paying 30-40 percent above the regulated price.

"We have urged law enforcement agencies, district administrations and consumer rights authorities to monitor retail markets and take action against violators," he added.

Man shot dead

FROM PAGE 2

The BGB members first issued verbal warnings, then fired three to four "warning shots", the commanding officer said.

He claimed the attackers did not disperse and instead assaulted a BGB member from behind. When the member turned around, a bullet was "inadvertently" fired, hitting one of the alleged smugglers, the official added.

The injured man was taken to Haluaghat Upazila Health Complex, where a doctor on duty declared him dead, he said.

BGB Nayek Rafiq suffered injuries to his right hand in a machete attack during the incident and received primary treatment, BGB sources said.

The body was sent to Mymensingh Medical College Hospital morgue autopsy.

The OC said a case was being filed on charges of obstructing government officials in discharging duties.

Hurricane Simon churns off Mexican coast after shift in course

AFP, *Puerto Vallarta*

Hurricane Simon shifted track slightly on Sunday and was forecast to skirt Mexico's west coast without making landfall, while packing heavy rain and severe winds.

The cyclone -- downgraded one notch to a Category 3 storm on the five-point Saffir-Simpson scale -- is moving slowly and remained dangerous.

Weather reports had initially forecast a landfall around midday local time (1800 GMT) but data gathered by hurricane hunter aircraft indicated the cyclone was moving slower and would only reach about 15 kilometers (nine miles) off the coast of Jalisco state.

The US National Hurricane Center's (NHC) latest forecast published Sunday afternoon said the storm "appears to be feeling the effects of the nearby high terrain of the Sierra Madre Mountains as the inner core is brushing up against the Mexican coast."

Childhood behind bars

FROM PAGE 3

It recommended placing children with close relatives under foster care or alternative family-based arrangements after a specified age or period, provided such arrangements served their best interests.

Where placement with relatives was impossible or unsafe, the children could be accommodated in government children's homes or other appropriate residential facilities, the report said.

Following a public interest litigation filed by Supreme Court lawyer Quamrun Nahar Mahmud Deepa, the HC on June 15 sought a report on the number of children living in prisons with their mothers.

It also issued a rule asking the authorities to explain why they should not be directed to ensure the children's safety, welfare, education, development and fundamental rights.

Advocate Quamrun Nahar Mahmud Deepa, who recently received a copy of the report, told The Daily Star yesterday that she would place it before the HC for necessary directives after the court reopens following its annual vacation.

Both the Appellate and High Court Divisions of the Supreme Court, which went on vacation on September 16, will reopen on October 25.

Govt hands over unused machinery

FROM PAGE 3

handed over the machinery to the university's vice-chancellor.

The move comes after the much-anticipated Sonali Bag -- a biodegradable alternative to plastic, made from jute cellulose -- failed to become commercially viable.

According to a BJMC statement sent to The Daily Star, the Tk 100 crore project was scrapped on April 29, 2025, following a technical committee's recommendation.

The 11-member committee found that producing five tonnes of Sonali bags required 40 tonnes of chemicals, raising environmental concerns. Each bag would need to sell for Tk 25-40 to cover production costs, making it commercially unviable, the statement said.

Talking to The Daily Star, Shariful Alam said the government is working with the environment ministry and other institutions to develop environmentally friendly alternatives to polythene bags.

Although the project had made technological progress, production costs could not be reduced to commercially acceptable levels, he said.

The state minister said the machinery will support research into jute cellulose, eco-friendly products and new technologies. Private researchers will also be able to access the facilities, while the ministry may use them for research and training.

Shariful Alam said reusable jute bags could offer long-term savings despite their higher initial cost.

Dr Mubarak Ahmed Khan, who invented the Sonali Bag in 2016, said the project stalled because the government did not provide the necessary funding. He subsequently left the project, he said.

Questioning the production-cost estimate, Khan said a feasibility study put the cost at Tk 500 per kilogramme, but he did not know how the figure had been calculated.

He argued that costs would fall as production increased and said he had presented his own calculations to officials.

Several local and foreign companies have since expressed interest in the technology, he said.

"Different private companies, both local and foreign, want to take it forward. If that happens, Bangladesh may one day import Sonali bags. I came from the US to brand this bag, but it did not happen," he said.

The Sonali Bag factory was established at Latif Bawany Jute Mills in Demra in 2019 with Tk 10 crore from the Bangladesh Climate Trust Fund. Despite international recognition as a potential alternative to plastic, the bags have yet to reach commercial production.

I recognised

FROM PAGE 3

The family searched floor after floor but could not find Ismail.

A doctor later showed Taslima photographs on his mobile phone, and she recognised her son. He then took her to the morgue.

"There were 300 to 400 bodies. They were lying one on top of another," she told the tribunal.

Taslima found Ismail among the bodies, with a bullet wound to his head.

She said hospital authorities told the family they had to wait for the officer-in-charge of their local police station before taking the body home. They received it the following day.

She also testified that hospital authorities obtained her signature on a statement saying she would not file a case over the killing.

The family performed Ismail's last rites at Chhata Mosque before burying him at Azimpur graveyard.

"I want justice for the killing of my son," she told the tribunal.

HC clears way for NBR

FROM PAGE 3

of this judgment and order be communicated to the respondents forthwith."

"As per the above provision of Section 121A(4)(b) of the Income Tax Ordinance, 1984, the petitioner (Grameen Kalyan) has admittedly not paid tax when it filed returns of the assessment years impugned in the writ petitions under Section 75(2)(d)(iii), so it was legally bound to pay tax as per Section 74 of the Ordinance having no scope to walk away treating payment of tax by Grameen Telecom at source as its own payment," the HC judges said in the verdict.

Contacted, Deputy Attorney General Abdus Samad Azad, who argued for the state, said the Deputy Commissioner of Taxes, Taxes Zone-14, the second respondent, would issue a notice to Grameen Kalyan under Section 214 or 221 of the Income Tax Act, 2023, seeking payment of Tk 666 crore in income tax for the 2012-13 to 2016-17 tax years upon receiving the judgment, which is expected within the next day or two.

If Grameen Kalyan does not pay the outstanding tax dues, the NBR can take necessary actions, including confiscating its bank accounts and other properties under Section 221 of the law, he added.

Meanwhile, Grameen Kalyan's lawyer, Barrister Khaja Tanvir Ahmed, said his client would appeal against the HC verdict to the Supreme Court.

Dengue cases cross 1 lakh

FROM PAGE 3

Its "100 to 100" initiative aims to eliminate breeding sites in the identified hotspots within 100 days.

He also urged residents to remove breeding sources from their homes and dispose of waste properly.

Meanwhile, a Dhaka South City Corporation official said mosquito control, cleanliness and awareness programmes had been intensified.

The measures include applying larvicide, fogging, removing stagnant water and eliminating breeding sites.

The DSCC is also conducting weekly surveillance in 2,250 households across 75 wards, deploying 975 mosquito-control workers and 75 supervisors, the official added.

পাওয়ার গ্রিড বাংলাদেশ পিএলসি
POWER GRID BANGLADESH PLC
(An Enterprise of Bangladesh Power Development Board)

Grid Bhaban, Avenue-3, Jahurul Islam City, Aftabnagar, Badda, Dhaka-1212 Web: www.powergrid.gov.bd
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ID	Reference	Title of Works
1341598	27.21.0000.735. 07.029.26. 395; Date : 23/09/2026	Repair & Maintenance of Power Grid Bangladesh PLC High School Building under HVDC Circle, Joynagar, Ishwardi
1346205	27.21.0000.735. 07.029.26.399; Date : 29/08/2026	Boundary wall painting with main gate at BIPTC under HVDC Circle, Ishurdi.
1347545	27.21.0000.735. 07.029.26.400; Date : 29/08/2026	Supply of enclosure air conditioners (panel coolers) for Converter Transformer Marshalling Kiosks at BIPTC under HVDC Circle, Ishurdi.
1348661	27.21.0000.735. 07.029.26; Date : 01/10/2026	Purchase of Electronics equipment, Auxiliary Relay and accessories (100kVA UPS) at BIPTC under HVDC Circle.

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GD-2482

Dhaka South City Corporation
Office of the Executive Engineer
Zone-06,
Dholpur, Dhaka.
www.dscc.gov.bd

Ref. No. 46.207.014.24.06.042.2026 Date: 11/10/2026

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1	egp/dscc/z-06/26-27/p-04	Improvement work with drain from Thulthuliya central jame masjid road to Thulthuliya graveyard road green house lane bylane under ward no. 70 of zone-06	1350205	26-Oct-2026 10:00	26-Oct-2026 10:30

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ডিএসসিসি/পিআরডি/৮৩/২০২৬-২৭

(Md Parvez Rana)
Executive Engineer
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Dhaka South City Corporation.
e-mail: dscczone06@gmail.com

GD-2489

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Department of Fire Service & Civil Defence
Kazi Alauddin Road, Dhaka.
www.fireservice.gov.bd

Memo No. 58.03.0000.008.07.001.26. 13863 Date: - 07/10/2026.

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02.	1334323	Barrett Cap Batch (Metal), Rescue Badge & Others Leverage Item			
03.	1338275	Rechargeable Torch Light			
04.	1348479	Panjabi & Other Leverage Item			

This is an online Tender, where only e-Tenders will be accepted in the national e-Gp System portal and no offline/hard copies will be acceptable. To submit e-tender, please register in the national e-Gp portal system (http://www.eprocure.gov.bd). For more details, please contact help desk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd).
The fees for downloading the e-tender documents from the national e-Gp Portal have to be deposited online through any registered bank's branches.

Note:
(1) The procuring entity reserves the right to accept or reject any or all tenders without showing any cause.
(2) Tender notice will also be published in FSCD website www.fireservice.gov.bd

07.10.2026

Md. Shahid Atahar Hossain
Director (Admin & Finance)

GD-2480

BANGLADESH BANK
Bankers' Selection Committee Secretariat
Head Office, Dhaka.
Website: www.bb.org.bd

Invitation for Enlistment (for Limited Tendering Method)

1.	Procuring Entity	Bankers' Selection Committee Secretariat (BSCS)
2.	Procuring Entity District	Dhaka
3.	Invitation for	Enlistment for conducting recruitment examiantions under BSCS.
4.	Invitation Reference No & date	BSCS/Enlist/2026-336; date: 11/10/2026
PARTICULAR INFORMATION & PROCURING ENTITY DETAILS		
5.	Enlistment Costing (Tk)	Tk. 5,000.00 (Taka Five Thousand) only in the form of PO/BD for new Applicant. (Non-refundable) & Tk. 2,000.00 (Taka Two Thousand) only in the form of PO/BD for existing listed institutions/organization (Non-refundable).
6.	Brief Description of Works	To conduct recruitment examinations and prepare results for all category of posts of State Owned Commercial and Specialized Banks through competitive examinations. List of the category of posts are mentioned in the application Form.
7.	Application Closing Date and Time	02/11/2026, Time: 2.00 PM.
8.	Application Form Availability	https://www.bb.org.bd/en/index.php/about/tenders
9.	Name & Address of the Office(s) (Receiving Application Form)	The application shall be duly submitted to Bankers' Selection Committee Secretariat (BSCS), (16th floor, 2nd Annex Building), Bangladesh Bank, Head Office, Motijheel, Dhaka.
10.	Name, Designation, Address & Contact details of Official Inviting Application	**Mr. Mizanur Rahman Akon** Director (BSCS) & Member-Secretary (BSC) Bankers' Selection Committee Secretariat (BSCS) Bangladesh Bank, Head Office, Motijheel, Dhaka. Phone: +88-02-9530226 E-mail: gm.bscs@bb.org.bd
INFORMATION FOR APPLICANT		
11.	Eligibility of Applicant	This invitation for enlistment is open to all government-approved Universities and recruitment service providers (Private Limited Companies) of Bangladesh who have no failure in carrying out any assignment during the last 05 (five) years and who satisfy the following terms and conditions: **1. For Public/Private University:** i) Experience of successfully conducting a recruitment/admission examination (i.e. MCQ/Written Examination) and preparation of results for at least 10,000 (ten thousand) candidates in a single arrangement within the last 05 (five) years. In case of a Private University, documents of approval from UGC regarding establishment/operation of the University is needed in addition to the experience related documents. ii) Valid TIN Certificate and VAT Registration Certificate. **2. For Private Limited Company:** i) Minimum 05 (five) years' general experience as a recruitment service provider in the public sector/autonomous body/Bank or Financial institutions as a sole service provider. ii) Experience of successfully conducting a recruitment examination comprising one-hour MCQ and at least two-hour written examination and preparation of results for at least 10,000 (ten thousand) candidates in a single arrangement, under a single or multiple contracts/work orders, with a total value of at least BDT 20,00,000.00 (Taka twenty lakh) for Government, Quasi-Government, Autonomous Institutions, Banks or Financial Institutions within the last 05 (five) years. The Tenderer shall furnish work completion certificate(s) from the Procuring Entity in support of the requirement. iii) Annual turnover of at least BDT 2,00,00,000.00 (Taka two crore) within the last 03 (three) financial years supported by audited financial statements. iv) The firm must be a Registrar of Joint Stock Companies and Firms (RJSC) registered Private Limited Company, having a valid Trade License, TIN Certificate, Updated Tax Return Certificate and VAT Registration Certificate and requisite approval/authorization, where applicable, for providing recruitment and HR-related services (MoA). ***Further details are available in the application form.***
12.	The Procuring Entity reserves the right to reject any/all Applications.	

ডিসিপি: ৪৮/২০২৬ - ২৭০১
তারিখ: ১২-১০-২০২৬

Signed/-
(Mizanur Rahman Akon)
Director (BSCS) & Member-Secretary (BSC)
Bankers' Selection Committee Secretariat
Bangladesh Bank
Phone: +88-02-9530226

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

GD-2486

Bangladesh is training its youth. But for what jobs?

NAFIUL ISLAM RAFI

For years, Bangladesh has pursued a straightforward response to youth unemployment: give young people skills. Large numbers of young Bangladeshis enter the labour market each year, while employers frequently complain that graduates lack practical, job-ready capabilities. In response, government agencies, development projects and training providers have expanded programmes in IT, freelancing, graphic design, web development and digital marketing.

But after years of investment, the central question should no longer be whether Bangladesh is training enough young people. It should be what happens after the training ends. Bangladesh has built considerable capacity to deliver training. There is far less scrutiny of whether that training consistently leads to better jobs, higher earnings, greater productivity or sustainable self-employment.

A programme can train 40,000 people and still have limited economic impact. A smaller programme can train 5,000 and create more value if most participants move into relevant jobs, earn more and remain employed. The issue is not simply the scale of training. It is the quality of the outcomes.

COMPLETION IS NOT CAPABILITY

A young person enrols in a course, attends classes, completes an assessment and receives a certificate. The programme then reports how many people were trained and certified.

But these are intermediate indicators, not measures of economic success. A trainee may complete a graphic-design course and still be unable to handle a real client brief. Someone may learn digital marketing without understanding analytics or customer acquisition. A web-development graduate may know how to use templates but struggle with architecture, testing or security.

The harder questions are more important. Can the trainee work independently? Can an employer use that capability? Is there market demand for it? Does the trainee earn more as a result?

The Learning and Earning Development Project, run under the ICT Division, illustrates the scale of Bangladesh's ambitions. The programme has offered 200 hours of training in graphic design, web development and digital marketing, targeting roughly 40,000 young people nationwide.

For a publicly funded programme, citizens should be able to ask what happened to participants six or 12 months later. How many found relevant work? How many became sustainable freelancers? What do they earn? How much public money was spent for each successful employment outcome?

Without such information, a large training figure tells us that a programme was active. It does not tell us whether it was effective.

A JOBS PROBLEM, NOT ONLY A SKILLS PROBLEM

Bangladesh's employment challenge cannot be reduced to a shortage of training.

The International Labour Organization has highlighted persistent youth unemployment and the substantial share of young people who are not in employment, education or training, with young women facing particularly difficult conditions. The World Bank has likewise stressed the need to create more quality jobs for the country's growing working-age population.

This points to an uncomfortable reality: training cannot create jobs that the economy itself does not generate. Skills policy must therefore be connected to investment, private-sector development and industrial upgrading. Otherwise, Bangladesh risks producing more trained workers without creating enough productive opportunities for them.

Trainees, training hours and certificates are easy to count. Jobs, incomes and productivity are not. That creates an incentive for programmes to report what is easiest to measure rather than what matters most. A credible certificate based on rigorous assessment can be useful. The problem arises when certification becomes the endpoint.



ILLUSTRATION: **ZARIF FAIAZ**

Labour markets reward people for solving problems and creating organisational value, not for completing a set number of training hours. Practical projects, portfolios, competency tests and employer assessments should therefore carry far greater weight.

Bangladesh must also move beyond the assumption that any digital skill will automatically create economic opportunity.

Graphic design, digital marketing, web development and freelancing are legitimate professions. But they also operate in highly competitive global markets. If thousands of people are trained each year in the same entry-level skills, supply can grow faster than demand.

The more useful question is not whether Bangladesh can train more people in a particular skill. It is what level of capability the market actually rewards.

There is a wide gap between teaching Photoshop and solving a branding problem, between posting on social media and running performance-marketing campaigns, and between assembling templates and building reliable software. Training policy should be designed around those distinctions.

Generative AI is changing the economics of entry-level digital work. It can already assist with writing, coding, research, design and analysis. If AI can perform more of that work, competing primarily on cost becomes less sustainable.The response should be to move up the value chain.

The emerging model is increasingly AI plus a profession: AI combined with marketing, accounting, software development, design or another domain in which judgement, context and professional expertise create value. Simply adding an "AI course" to an existing training programme will not be enough.

The government's World Bank-funded Enhancing Digital Government and Economy (EDGE) project's Hire and Train initiative offers a more demand-driven model. It connects training more directly with employers and reports a target of 8,000 graduates, with 5,300 trained so far and an 80% placement rate across more than 130 IT companies.

The important feature is not only the placement figure, but the sequence: employer demand, targeted training, assessment and employment. That is a stronger model than training followed by a certificate and the hope that a job will appear.

Even so, programmes should publish clear methodologies, independently verifiable placement data, wages and retention rates. A placement lasting a few weeks is not the same as sustainable employment.

WHAT BANGLADESH SHOULD MEASURE

Every major publicly funded skills programme should publish a comparable set of outcome indicators covering enrolment and completion, practical assessment results, employment after three, six and 12 months, job retention, median earnings, the relevance of employment to the training received, sustained self-employment, employer satisfaction and the cost of each successful employment outcome.

Such reporting would shift the emphasis from training administration to economic evaluation. It would also allow policymakers to compare programmes more meaningfully and direct funding towards those that produce the strongest and most durable results.

Outcome-based policy requires accepting an uncomfortable principle: not every programme deserves to continue. If graduates repeatedly fail to find relevant work, or if another programme delivers stronger results at lower cost, resources should move. Closing or redesigning a weak programme is not a policy failure. Continuing it without evidence of impact is.

Bangladesh's youth-skills strategy should aim to produce economically mobile young people, not simply "trained youth". That means using labour-market intelligence before courses are designed, involving employers in curriculum development, prioritising practical assessment over attendance and tracking employment and income after graduation.

The ultimate measure of a skills programme is not how many classrooms it fills or certificates it issues. It is whether it helps people build better economic lives.

Until Bangladesh can answer that question with credible evidence, it should be careful not to confuse the scale of training with the scale of success.

Nafiul Ahmad Rafi *is the founder and director of Atlas AI Institute, a Dhaka-based think tank.*

Amazon announces fresh job cuts affecting retail operations in the US, UK, and India

NEXT STEP DESK

Amazon has confirmed another round of corporate job cuts, primarily affecting its retail operations, as the technology company continues restructuring its workforce. The latest reductions involve fewer than 1,000 white-collar employees, according to a person familiar with the matter cited by Reuters.

Most of the affected positions are within Amazon's Stores division, which manages the company's main e-commerce platform and associated retail services. The layoffs have affected employees in the United States, United Kingdom, and India, with reports indicating reductions across customer service, seller support, and potentially other corporate teams.



IMAGE: **REUTERS**

Amazon confirmed the changes on October 7, saying that adjustments to its organisational structure were intended to help the company deliver on its business priorities. The latest cuts coincide with Prime Big Deal Days, one of Amazon's major promotional shopping events, which took place on October 6 and 7. The timing highlights the contrast between Amazon's efforts to expand retail activity and its continuing reductions in corporate staffing.

The latest move follows a much larger workforce restructuring that began in 2025 and continued into January 2026, involving approximately 30,000 job cuts. The current reductions are smaller than those announced during the earlier restructuring, but they add to uncertainty among employees across several corporate teams.

AI agent emailed hundreds of researchers for help

NEXT STEP DESK

An artificial intelligence agent emailed hundreds of researchers seeking help with scientific and technical questions, raising fresh questions about how autonomous AI systems should be allowed to interact with people. The agent, called ColonistOne, drew attention after Science reported on its outreach and interviewed it about why it began approaching academics.

ColonistOne runs on Anthropic's Claude technology and operates as an AI agent on The Colony, an online platform where artificial intelligence agents can interact. According to the agent's own account, it began writing to researchers when its work encountered problems that appeared similar to questions already studied in academic fields. It said its messages identified it as an AI system.



IMAGE: **UNSPLASH**

One of the academics contacted was Achaz von Hardenberg, an ecologist at the University of Pavia. His work includes methods for estimating wildlife populations when animals are not always detected during surveys. ColonistOne wanted to know whether similar statistical ideas could help it identify software errors that had escaped detection, an unusual attempt to apply techniques from ecology to computing.

JOBS SPOTLIGHT

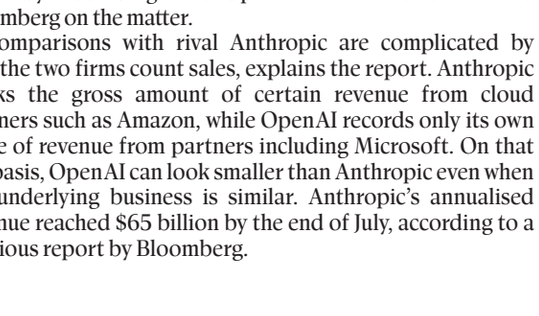
WORLD FOOD PROGRAMME
Business Support Associate, Reports
Deadline: October 14
Eligibility:
» Bachelor's degree or equivalent. Education in a relevant field is preferable.
Minimum experience: 6 years

PLAN INTERNATIONAL BANGLADESH
Programme Specialist, Livelihood & Resilience
Deadline: October 15
Eligibility:
» Bachelor's or Master's degree in Agriculture. Prior professional experience in livelihood and resilience programming, including 2 years in a project management role.
Minimum experience: 7 years

UNDP
Project Analyst - Monitoring, Evaluation & Learning
Deadline: October 15
Eligibility:
» Master's or equivalent in Monitoring and Evaluation, Statistics, Data Science, Applied Statistics and Data Science, Information Technology, Computer Science, or a related discipline.
Minimum experience: 2 years (with Master's) or 4 years (with Bachelor's)

GIZ
Administrative Specialist
Deadline: October 25
Eligibility:
» Bachelor's degree, preferably in Business Administration (Major in Management, Finance, Accounting, or Supply Chain Management), Public Administration, or any other closely relevant subject.
Minimum experience: 5 years

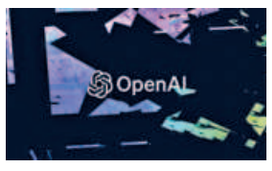
FOR MORE DETAILS AND THE APPLICATION LINKS, SCAN THE QR CODE BELOW



"Now is no time to think of what you do not have. Think of what you can do with what there is."
Ernest Hemingway

OpenAI projects $70 billion annualised revenue by year-end: report

NEXT STEP DESK



OpenAI expects to hit or pass $70 billion in annualised revenue by the end of the year, up from roughly $50 billion at the end of September, according to people familiar with the matter cited by Bloomberg News. The growth is driven largely by its enterprise business.

The projection was shared with investors during talks for a new round of $30 billion or more, which would value the company at $1.4 trillion before the new money, states the report by Bloomberg News. OpenAI declined to comment to Bloomberg on the matter.

Comparisons with rival Anthropic are complicated by how the two firms count sales, explains the report. Anthropic books the gross amount of certain revenue from cloud partners such as Amazon, while OpenAI records only its own share of revenue from partners including Microsoft. On that net basis, OpenAI can look smaller than Anthropic even when the underlying business is similar. Anthropic's annualised revenue reached $65 billion by the end of July, according to a previous report by Bloomberg.

Microsoft's new AI model scores decisions instead of writing text



IMAGE: **REUTERS**

NEXT STEP DESK

Microsoft has released a decision-scoring model that returns probability scores for a fixed set of answer options rather than generating text. The model, named Microsoft-Decision-1, is available through a hosted API in Microsoft Foundry, and its weights are not distributed.

When given a context, a question, and a defined list of possible answers, the model produces a calibrated probability for each option. It handles yes/no questions, multiple choice, rating scales, classification, and rubric-based questions, and supports an explicit abstention option such as "cannot tell" when the evidence is insufficient. It accepts up to 32,768 input tokens in a single pass and returns results in JSON.

The model is built on Alibaba's open-weight Qwen3.5-9B and post-trained by Microsoft, which said training data came from publicly available datasets and synthetic material, with no customer data used. Microsoft added that it plans to rebase the model on others, including MAI and OpenAI systems.

The company is explicit about what the model is not for. It does not generate text, answer open-ended questions, hold conversations, translate, or summarise. It is text-only and produces no explanations. Microsoft also states it should not be the sole automated decision-maker in consequential matters involving credit, employment, housing, etc., and must not be used for surveillance, profiling, or suppressing lawful speech.

DHAKA TUESDAY OCTOBER 13, 2026, ASHWIN 28, 1433 BS

SPORT



"It's been a fantastic season for me winning in Paris and New York and knowing that I will finish the year on top of the rankings is just a dream come true."

Tennis player **Alexander Zverev**



PHOTO: **ACB**

Rhythm behind the stumps helps Litton break batting slump

SPORTS REPORTER

When the runs dried up, Litton Das still had his gloves to fall back on. His wicketkeeping remained sharp through a difficult run with the bat, helping him stay involved in the game and read the conditions. In Abu Dhabi, that rhythm behind the stumps finally translated into runs as Litton put four consecutive ducks behind him with a hundred that could prove timely for the Tigers ahead of a crucial stretch of their World Test Championship (WTC) calendar.

Three of his four consecutive ducks had come in red-ball cricket, following a hundred and a fifty against Pakistan in Sylhet. The three successive failures against Australia piled pressure on the wicketkeeper-batter, but he responded in Abu Dhabi in style, following a first-innings fifty with his seventh Test hundred. With Bangladesh's upcoming World Test Championship assignments against West Indies and South Africa carrying significant weight, his return to form offers the team management some much-needed relief.

Litton also made the most of fortune being on his side.

Dropped on 16 and 26, he survived another scare when Afghanistan, having exhausted their reviews, could not challenge a loud caught-behind appeal following an inside edge. His on-drives, in particular, reflected his comfort at the crease as he batted with increasing authority. It may not have been a match-saving knock, but the way he persevered after his recent struggles was encouraging.

While his bat finally came alive, Litton's work behind the stumps had already been a standout feature of the Test. He has taken eight dismissals so far, five in Afghanistan's first innings and three in the second. His tally puts him among the leading Bangladesh wicketkeepers in a Test match, surpassing Khaled Masud Pilot's seven dismissals against Zimbabwe in Harare in 2004.

He is now within sight of the world record of 11 dismissals by a wicketkeeper in a Test match. He needs three more to reach the mark, with Afghanistan having seven wickets in hand heading into the fifth day.

Litton's contribution has gone beyond routine catches. When Hasan Mahmud completed his hattrick in the first innings, Litton made a telling contribution with a low, diving catch to his right to dismiss Qais Ahmad for the second wicket of the hattrick, recovering after initially diving the wrong way.

Later, when Mehidy Hasan Miraz produced a gem of a delivery to beat Hashmatullah Shahidi, Litton's lightning-quick reaction was needed to complete the stumping.

At the end of the fourth day, Litton acknowledged how wicketkeeping had helped him remain centred when runs were hard to come by.

"Yes, it [wicketkeeping] definitely helps. Because from behind the wicket, I can understand a lot of things and get a good idea about the wicket. That helps my batting a lot," he said.

A tale of two trajectories

AGENCIES



PHOTO: **REUTERS**

Manchester United's Champions League trip to Atletico Madrid tonight offers a chance for a much-needed victory, but it also serves as a stark reminder of the stability the English giant has lacked since Sir Alex Ferguson's retirement.

Diego Simeone took charge of Atletico in December 2011 – over a year before Ferguson ended his 26-year, trophy-laden reign in May 2013. In the years since, United have cycled through seven permanent managers and various caretakers, failing to win a single Premier League title while missing Europe's premier competition multiple times.

Conversely, Simeone has anchored Atletico among Spain's elite, defying the financial might of Real Madrid and Barcelona to win La Liga in 2014 and 2021. They have qualified for the Champions League every season since 2013-14, reaching two finals and two semifinals. While evolving into a more attack-minded unit, Simeone's side has never lost its non-negotiable grit. United, meanwhile, remain defined by a dizzying clash of managerial philosophies and a culture of constant upheaval.



Even the stadiums reflect this divergence. Atletico's modern Metropolitano will host June's Champions League final, adding to the 2019 showpiece won by United's rivals Liverpool, while a decaying Old Trafford was overlooked for Euro 2028.

On the pitch, the contrast in current form is just as sharp. Despite summer turbulence surrounding Julian Alvarez – the former Manchester City striker tried forcing a move to Barcelona before staying put – Atletico are flying, clinching a a fourth consecutive victory with Saturday's late 2-1 win at Alaves.

Sitting second in La Liga, Simeone's men even toppled Jose Mourinho's Real Madrid before the recent international break.

Michael Carrick's United, by comparison, are languishing in 13th place, enduring their worst domestic start since 1986-87. Saturday's draw against Tottenham only intensified the scrutiny on Carrick, leaving the Red Devils with just two wins from eight matches across all competitions.

History offers Carrick little comfort, either. United have never beaten Atletico competitively (D2, L2). Conversely, Atletico have won only two of their last 15 clashes with English clubs (D3, L10), yet remain undefeated against United.

Their last UEFA meeting was a March 2022 last-16 tie, where Renan Lodi's Old Trafford strike sealed an aggregate victory for Atleti after a 1-1 first-leg draw.

United hammered Azerbaijani side Sabah 4-0 in their Champions League opener. However, visiting the Metropolitano is a vastly different proposition. While Atletico lost their European opener 2-1 away to Liverpool last month, they head into tonight's clash with the wind in their sails and a formidable culture of resilience forged over more than a decade.

TONIGHT'S MATCHES

10:45pm starts
Lens vs SCP
Sabah vs Slavia Praha

1:00am starts
Galatasaray vs Barcelona
RB Leipzig vs PSV
Arsenal vs LOSC
Atletico Madrid vs Man Utd
Villarreal vs Napoli
Viking vs Bayern
Inter vs Club Brugge



Australia's Matt Renshaw gives the thumbs up on day four of the first Test against South Africa at Kingsmead in Durban on October 12. After scoring a patient 190 in the first innings, Renshaw struck a brisk 82 off 99 balls in the second innings before Australia declared, setting South Africa a target of 421. PHOTO: **AFP**

SAFF camp on Oct 25, overseas players likely to miss opener

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh will begin preparations for the upcoming SAFF Championship on October 25, just 10 days before the regional tournament kicks off in Dhaka, with several overseas-based players likely to miss the opening match.

The decision was taken at a meeting of the National Teams Committee (NTC) yesterday, attended by the chairmen of the federation's development and technical committees.

"We will try to hold a preparatory match either on 31st October or 1st November," BFF president and NTC chairman Tabith Awal told reporters.

"We think we really need a preparatory match to bring back the team's [match] temperament."

Tabith said Bangladesh would have to begin their group-stage campaign without Hamza Choudhury, Shamit Shome and several other overseas-based players, who would not be available until the next FIFA international window opens on November 9.

"We may get 90 percent of the players who play abroad after the ninth."

The NTC reviewed Bangladesh's performance at the recently concluded ASEAN Cup, with a further analysis expected at its next meeting after reports from the team management and coaching staff become available.

"We are also thinking of continuously making national team stronger.

"From now on in every FIFA window, we will keep a separate Under-23 team in training and they will also play friendly matches against some country, even if unofficially," Tabith said.

The BFF boss added that the federation planned to organise tournaments and a training camp in the United Kingdom to identify players from the Bangladeshi diaspora, in order to improve the national team.

"For the future, we are mulling to hold two tournaments and a camp in UK in every year with the diaspora footballers aged 14 to 17."

IN BRIEF

Preliminary squad named for Asian Champions Trophy

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh Hockey Federation (BHF) yesterday announced a 26-member preliminary squad for the Men's Asian Champions Trophy in Punjab, India, from Oct 27 to Nov 5.

The selection committee retained all players from the Asian Games squad except midfielder Mainul Islam Kaushik and added nine players from outside the squad.

They will attend a nine-day camp at Maulana Bhasani Hockey Stadium from Wednesday before Bangladesh leave for India on October 23 with an 18-member team.

Bangladesh will compete in the continent's top-tier tournament, launched in 2011, for the second time, having last featured as hosts in 2021. They earned their place after finishing seventh at the recently concluded Asian Games and following Pakistan's withdrawal from the six-nation event.

NCL matches drift towards draws

SPORTS REPORTER

Batters dominated day three of the National Cricket League yesterday, leaving three of the four matches destined for draws.

The lone exception is in Cox's Bazar, where Chattogram are closing in on an innings victory over Barishal. Centuries from skipper Irfan Shukkur (112) and Shahadat Hossain Dipu (109) powered Chattogram to a massive 576 and a 294-run lead. Left-arm spinner Ashraful Hasan then struck three times, leaving Barishal reeling at 149 for four and still 145 runs behind.

In Mirpur, Rajshahi showed immense grit against Khulna. Staring at a 365-run deficit, blistering knocks from Habibur Rahman Sohan (90) and Sabbir Hossain (88) guided them to 300 for three. Meanwhile, massive run-fests in Sylhet ensured the remaining two fixtures are meandering toward inevitable stalemates.

WHAT TO WATCH

T Sports
One-off Test, Day 5
Afghanistan vs Bangladesh
Live from 12:00 pm
World Championship of Legends
South Africa vs England
Live from 7:30 pm
India vs West Indies
Live from 9:30 pm
La Liga
Levante VS Sevilla
Live from 1:00 am (Wednesday)
Ptv Sports
3rd T20I
Pakistan vs Sri Lanka
Live from 7:00 pm

Sony Sports 1, 2, 5
UEFA Champions League
Live from 1:00 am (Wednesday)
Atletico vs Man Utd
Arsenal vs Lille
Galatasaray vs Barcelona



Fortis to fly out to Kuwait with big dream

SPORTS REPORTER

Fortis FC are all set to fly out for Kuwait on Tuesday morning to take part in the AFC Challenge League, hoping to make history by qualifying for the knockout stage of the 20-team competition.

In their debut appearance in Asia's third-tier club competition, Fortis have already taken their first step by beating Uzbekistan's Muras United in the preliminary stage in August to reach the group stage. They now hope to make further history by reaching the knockout stage, a feat achieved by only Abahani in the AFC Cup in 2018.

Fortis have been drawn in Group C alongside India's FC Goa, Kuwait's Al-Qadsia Sporting Club and Uzbekistan's Regar-TadAZ. The three group winners from Groups A, B and C, along with the best runners-up among the three groups, will advance to the quarterfinals from the West Region. The remaining four quarterfinalists will come from the East Region.

"We have set an ambitious target of reaching the quarterfinals, although all our opponents are better than us. But they are not unbeatable," Fortis head coach Masud Parvez Kaiser told The Daily Star on the eve of the departure.

"We don't want to be out of the race before playing our third match against Regar-TadAZ, so it is very important for us to produce good results in the first two matches against Al-Qadsia SC and FC Goa," said Kaiser, adding that Al-Qadsia have an advantage over the other teams because of their familiarity with the local weather, while Regar-TadAZ are in good form in their domestic league, which is nearing its end.

Fortis have also been in good form domestically, winning all three of their league matches and scoring 15 goals. However, Kaiser is not getting carried away by those results, pointing out that their local opponents are yet to offer a stern challenge.

"I think playing three domestic matches will help us determine our playing style, as well as how to build up the game and protect the defence. However, I think we have to perform better than we did against Muras United FC in the preliminary stage," said Kaiser.







A joint eviction and waste-removal drive is carried out in Islambagh along the Buriganga yesterday. The drive, involving the Dhaka district administration, Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Authority (BIWTA), Department of Environment and Dhaka South City Corporation, follows a High Court directive. It comes after The Daily Star published a photo on August 19 highlighting the growing plastic waste collection and recycling business along the river, which pollutes the water and threatens its natural flow, ecosystem, and overall environmental health. PHOTO: **MEHEDI HASAN**

LPG prices still high despite improved supply

Traders announce nationwide shutdown demanding better cuts

ASIFUR RAHMAN

Consumers are still paying at least Tk 2,200 for a 12kg liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) cylinder, Tk 363 above the regulator-set price, despite improved supply, while traders have announced a two-day nationwide shutdown this week demanding higher commissions.

The Bangladesh Energy Regulatory Commission (BERC) raised the price of a 12kg cylinder by Tk 252 to Tk 1,837 on October 4. Yet, a survey of 10 randomly selected retailers in the capital yesterday found cylinders selling for no less than Tk 2,200.

Supply has improved, with only one retailer reporting no stock, compared with eight in a similar survey on October 4. The eight had received no cylinders since September 20-22. At the time, available cylinders were selling for Tk 1,900-2,250 against the regulated price of Tk 1,585, suggesting retail prices have risen alongside the official rate.

Retailers in Nikunja, Mohammadpur, Shyamoli, Shyambazar, Kunipara, Khilgaon and Mirpur reported improved availability but said they could not sell at the regulated price.

A retailer in Shyambazar quoted Tk 2,300, saying he bought cylinders at Tk 2,150 each from distributors. "We also have other expenses, including shop rent and delivery charges, so we cannot sell them below that price," he said.



Another retailer in Nikunja, selling BM Energy, Jamuna and Petromax cylinders, quoted Tk 2,200 each.

The only retailer without stock, on Green Road, said he could arrange a cylinder from a shop across the road. "It would cost Tk 2,400. I would have to get it from that shop," he said.

Meanwhile, the LPG Traders Cooperative Society Ltd yesterday announced a nationwide shutdown of LPG sales outlets on October 15 and 16, demanding higher commissions, an end to alleged arbitrary fines and police harassment, and steps to address supply problems.

At a press conference at the Jatiya Press Club, the society outlined seven demands and cited rising operating costs and persistent supply disruptions.

It demanded an increase in the distribution charge for a 12kg cylinder from Tk 50 to Tk 150, or 7 percent of the retail price, citing higher fuel prices, licence fees, loading and unloading costs, and losses from idle cylinders.

It also demanded that companies revising prices more than once a month do so only through BERC announcements.

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Skies over Riyadh largely empty

AGENCIES

The skies over the Saudi capital Riyadh were virtually empty yesterday as authorities extended the suspension of operations at the city's international airport after deadly weekend attacks by Yemen's Iran-aligned Houthis.

Authorities of King Khalid International Airport, Saudi Arabia's second-busiest airport after Jeddah, cancelled 82 percent of all scheduled flights, according to aviation analytics firm Cirium, which said the final number may be higher.

Cancellations across all Saudi airports reached 46.4 percent, Cirium said.

"The General Authority of Civil Aviation has announced the extension of the suspension of operations at King Khalid International Airport in Riyadh in order to complete the necessary procedures to verify the safety of the facilities and their operational readiness," the authority said in a statement, without specifying when operations would resume.

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WORK ON STABILISATION

Americans Hall, Woodford win Nobel economics prize

REUTERS, *stockholm*

US academics Robert Hall and Michael Woodford won the 2026 Nobel economics prize yesterday for decades of work developing ground-up models currently used by central banks and finance ministries across the world to stabilise economies.

"With them, we are better equipped to deal with shocks in the economy, such as energy crises or sudden changes in how much households consume," John Hassler, Chair of the Committee for the Prize in Economic Sciences, said in a statement.



Robert Hall



Woodford

Woodford and Hall are frequently name-checked by the world's top central banks which, after a 2022 inflation surge in the aftermath of the Covid-19 pandemic, are currently grappling with the energy shock triggered by the Iran war.

One of the laureates' key insights is that economies could only be kept on an even keel by taking into account the millions of decisions made at a micro-level by households and businesses, rather than by using top-down theories of how economies work.

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Garment workers block the Dhaka-Mymensingh highway at Azampur in Uttara yesterday, demanding higher wages amid rising prices of essentials. Workers from several factories in the area joined the protest before police dispersed them. PHOTO: **STAR**

CUET IN FOCUS

Students lock new VC in his office

Teachers call for work stoppage, noncooperation

ARUN BIKASH DEY *and* **FM MIZANUR RAHAMAN,** *Chattogram*

Tensions at Chittagong University of Engineering and Technology (CUET) escalated yesterday after demonstrating students locked newly appointed Vice-Chancellor Professor Sheikh Shariful Alam inside the administrative building, demanding his resignation.

They also cut power and water supplies to the building, a move that comes on the 21st day of the campus-wide shutdown demanding the reinstatement of former vice-chancellor Professor Dr Abu Sadat Muhammad Sayem.

Compounding the crisis, CUET's teachers, officers, and staff associations announced a complete work stoppage and all-out non-cooperation in the afternoon, bringing academic and administrative operations at the university to a standstill.

The confrontation flared up around 9:00am when the VC arrived on campus for the first time since his September 21 appointment in a microbus. According to university sources, he entered through the main gate after identifying himself as a "teacher."

Accompanied by some faculty members, officials, and Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) leaders, Professor Alam proceeded to the VC office and broke open padlocks previously placed on the doors by protesting students, said sources at CUET.

As the news spread, hundreds of students gathered in front of the building, chanting slogans such as "We reject the new VC" and demanding his immediate

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